



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/JANUARY 2016/VOL 52 NO 1

HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG

Field Trips

**Nearby Christmas Bird Counts
Saturday and Sunday,
January 2 and 3
See page 4 for details**

**Majestic View Nature Center
Saturday, January 9
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Majestic View Nature Center, 7030 Garrison St, Arvada, CO 80004. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot.

From the East: Wadsworth Blvd to 68th Ave, west to Garrison St, north to the Nature Center parking lot.

From the West: Oberon Rd to 66th Ave, east to Garrison St, north to the Nature Center parking lot.

Bring water and snacks for a half-day trip walking on paths in a beautiful park.

Leader uses a wheelchair for mobility so the trip will be accessible. **Register online or contact leader.**

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Renew your DFO membership for 2016!

Renew online at <http://dfobirds.org> with your credit card, or by filling out and mailing the application on the back page.

Changes are coming to the DFO Board

by Bill Wuerthele

DFO's Nominating Committee is tasked with nominating Officers and Directors for election by the membership at DFO's annual business meeting each April.

The current committee members are Candice Johnson, Bill Wuerthele, and Joe Roller. They have spent several months looking for candidates who would bring needed skills to the Board of Directors.

At the board's November 12, 2015 meeting, the committee reported that it had found two excellent candidates who it will nominate for election in April: Susan Blansett and Sue Summers.

In addition, the committee reported that Kay Niyo, after years of excellent service, has asked to step down as secretary on December 31, 2015, and Kris Haglund has agreed to become the new secretary.

Further, the Committee noted that Mary Geder, also after years of excellent service, has asked to step down as treasurer at the end of her term in April, and Sue Summers has been identified as the candidate to become the new treasurer.

To facilitate the transition in these two key offices and to bring needed expertise on board as soon as possible, the committee recommended that the board make a number of interim appointments, effective January 1, 2016. The board accepted the recommendations and made the following changes at the meeting:

- appointed Kris Haglund as the new secretary, on an interim basis, with Kris to stand for election to that office at the April membership meeting; and
- appointed Kay Niyo as a director, on an interim basis, with Kay to stand for election as a director at the April membership meeting.

By way of a December 12th email vote, the Board will act on the Committee's recommendation to

- appoint Susan Blansett as a director, on an interim basis, with Susan to stand for election as a director at the April membership meeting; and
- appoint Sue Summers as a director, on an interim basis, with Sue to stand for election as treasurer at the April membership meeting.

Susan Blansett and Sue Summers are outstanding candidates for the board. Susan Blansett is a principal in the McCarthy/Blansett Group LLC, a consulting firm with expertise in fundraising and economic development for Chambers of Commerce and Nonprofits.

Her skills are in development and marketing. She has served as a facilitator at board retreats. Susan is a long-time birder and an active member of DFO.

Sue Summers is a Regional Vice President with Trust Company of America, a Centennial based provider of services to financial advisors. Originally from

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Field Trips

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Cañon City

Sunday, January 10

6:30 AM - 6:30 PM

Mark Amershek (Email: mamershek@msn.com Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Yale Station Park-n-Ride at 5315 East Yale Ave, Denver.

Coleader: Bruce Neuman. We will carpool using three cars from the RTD Park-n-Ride.

Taking I-25, we will pass through Colorado Springs and continue down CO Hwy 115 birding at various areas along the way.

We will then take US 50 west to the Cañon City area for the remainder of the day.

Bring snacks, lunch, water, binocs (scope if you have one), and dress for the weather.

This is a full-day trip. Come prepared to share a ride so we only have 3 cars. Each car should have a 2-way radio for communication during the trip.

Register online or contact leader.

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, January 10

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the

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Dues increase helps fund DFO benefits



From the President

Joe Roller

Over the past few years DFO's expenses have risen, driven both by inflation and enhanced member services.

Among the new services is our sharp-looking and highly interactive DFO website, <http://dfobirds.org>, which provides an easy way to register for field trips, renew your membership, and keep up with DFO news.

And a few years ago we began paying honoraria to presenters at our evening programs, which has attracted the best of the best speakers.

For the first time ever, DFO has a beautiful new logo and logo business cards, useful for attracting new members, and production costs were extremely low.

For the first time in a long time, a small fraction of your dues is being set aside to support youth education and conservation science projects through our grants program. In recent years, the sole source of funding for grants was donations by generous individuals. You can feel proud of that.

Examples of inflation abound. Among them are sharp rises in liability insurance costs and in the annual fee to DMNS for our use of the Ricketson Auditorium. And inflation will continue.

In August, your DFO Board took the responsible step of raising dues for members receiving an online version of *The Lark Bunting* from \$20 to \$25. It had been twenty years since dues were less than \$20.

At the November board meeting, dues were raised from \$35 to \$40 annually for members receiving the newsletter by U.S. mail. Total costs to produce, print, and mail each month's newsletter are actually \$38.24.

As always, I am happy to respond to questions you might have by email at jroller9@gmail.com or on my cell phone at 303-204-0828.

Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Robert Beck, Jean and Charlie Curlee, Janet and A.J. Gest, Fionn and Kristin Gruebmeier, Grace Hahn, Sonja Hahn, Tina Jones, Mary Keithler, Rex McGehee, Karleen Schofield, Sondra Bland and Bob Spencer, Sue Summers, Karen and John Weslar, Suzanne and Bill Wuerthele

BOARD CHANGES, *continued from page 1*

Seattle, Sue moved to the Denver area in 2013. While in Seattle, she served as field trip chair and board member of a local Audubon chapter and spent several years as treasurer of a local chapter of the League of Women Voters.

Sue is a long-time birder, and since moving to Denver, she has become very active in the Denver birding community and DFO. For example, Sue recently completed DFO's Field Trip Leader training program and is now coleading field trips.

Article V of the DFO Bylaws contains the provision that gives the Board of Directors authority to make appointments to the board. In researching opportunities for making interim appointments, the committee discovered that, although the bylaws give the board broad authority in this area, there is little information explaining how that authority is to be implemented.

As a result, the committee identified the need for revisions to Section 5.5.4 of the bylaws to address this shortcoming. The committee also identified a number of places in the bylaws where "housekeeping" changes were needed to provide clarity.

A DFO Bylaws working group consisting of Chuck Hundertmark, Kay Niyo, Bill Wuerthele, and Joe Roller developed the needed language changes and recommended that the board adopt those revisions.

The recommendations were adopted by the board and are detailed in the board's minutes for the November 12th meeting, which are available on DFO's website. All of the revisions will take effect 30 days from the date of their adoption.

Invite a birder to join the DFO!

Our spiffy new DFO logo business cards are meant for members to carry proudly and to be given to birders who might be enticed join our great club! Carry two or three in your purse or wallet to welcome prospective newcomers.

These handsome cards will be available at every DFO meeting AND at the compilation dinner at Chatfield SP after the Denver Christmas Bird Count on December 19.



Field Trips

Continued from page 2

important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles. Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly.

Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Allenspark and Lyons

Saturday, January 16

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Niña Routh & Mike Ser-ruto (Email: nrouth@copper.net Phone: 303-987-8687)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: We plan on car-pooling from both locations so be prepared for riding as well as driving.

At 8 AM early birders meet at the southwest side of the Wagon Road RTD Park-n-Ride, 120th Ave and Huron (less than 0.5 miles west of I-25).

At 8:40 AM other birders can meet us at Lyons Park-n-Ride at Sandstone Park, 555 4th Ave in Lyons.

Join leaders for a trip to Allenspark to look for rosy-finches and other winter residents. Travel to Lyons for lunch.

Afterward we will poke around for resident birds in the cemetery and other areas.

Be prepared for possible wintry weather and maybe 2-mile walk. Wear appropriate clothes/boots. Bring two-way radios if you can.

Register online or contact leader.

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Field Trips

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South Platte River at West Florida Avenue

Sunday, January 17

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Bill Wuerthele (Email: wuerthel@ecentral.com Phone: 303-333-2519)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Overland Pond Parking Lot, a small lot just east of the river on West Florida Ave.

The S Platte River here generally stays open in the winter, offering nice, close views of a variety of waterfowl.

We will walk along the Platte River Trail covering less than two miles total. The trail is level, but can be icy.

Be prepared for cold weather. Bring water or a hot drink and a snack. **Register online or contact leader.**

Parker Regional Park

Saturday, January 23

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Patti Galli (Email: cookiegirl56@Live.com Phone: 303-995-4192)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: From Main St intersection in Parker, go south on Parker Rd (CO 83) for 1.2 miles.

Turn right on Indianpipe Ln and right into McCabe Meadows parking lot in Salisbury Park (Parker Regional Park).

We bird along the Cherry Creek Trail.

Easy walking along bike trail and we should see winter residents and some hawks. Dress for the weather.

Bring snacks and water for 3-hour hike. **Register online or contact leader.**

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Call for 2016 DFO grant applications

by Candice Johnson

The DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Fund is now accepting applications for grants to encourage the study, appreciation, and preservation of birds and their habitats. Preference will be given to projects in the Denver metropolitan area, the Front Range, the state of Colorado, and the USA, in that order.

Awards typically range from \$500 to \$2000. Recent past grants have included grants to fund student scholarships to birding camps, support research on Clark's Nutcrackers and Flammulated Owls, and to restore prairie habitat for birds at Dodd Reservoir in Boulder County.

Proposals should include a description of goals, a methodology, a complete budget including other funding sources, and an indication of any completed preliminary work.

It is expected that successful grantees will provide a report on their project to be published in *The Lark Bunting* newsletter and on the DFO website, or lead a field trip to the research site, or make a presentation at the monthly meeting.

An application form and a history of past grants awarded are available on the website at <http://dfobirds.org/Grants/>.

Deadline for applications is February 1, 2016. Notification of awards will be made soon after this date.

Nearby Christmas Bird Counts

Douglas County Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, January 2, 2016

Nancy Crews, Count Compiler (303-842-2833)

Birders of all abilities are invited to join the annual Douglas County Christmas Bird Count. Please call Roxborough State Park Visitor Center at 303-973-3959 by December 31, 2015 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to be placed on a team. Contact Nancy Crews with questions.

Team leaders will contact you about time and place to meet. At 4:00 p.m. after the count, birders will meet at Roxborough State Park for a compilation and chili dinner and potluck. There is a \$2 charge for chili. Birders are asked to bring a side dish to share.

Barr Lake Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, January 3, 2016

Chuck Hundertmark, Compiler (303-604-0531, chundertmark8@gmail.com)

Tyler Edmondson, Co-compiler (303-659-4348, tyler.edmondson@birdconservancy.org)

Meet at Old Stone House (BCR Headquarters) at 7 a.m. to organize for field activity. The headquarters is at the south end of Lark Bunting Lane in Brighton. Coffee, hot cocoa, tea, and donuts will be available as we organize for the count. Participants can register online (preferred) at <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count> or contact Chuck Hundertmark.

Last Month's Program: *Alfred M. Bailey*

Tim Johnson

November's DFO meeting on November 23 featured a modest departure from its usual format. Kris Haglund and Liz Clancy, archivists emeritae from the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, jointly presented "Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey?"

They celebrated the career of Alfred Marshall Bailey, DMNS's second director from 1936 to 1969. Bailey was responsible for much of the Museum's development and direction. He was the force behind the Museum's dioramas, and the Museum's study collections increased greatly during his oversight.

Kris has been associated with DMNS since 1975, and managed the museum's noncurrent archives (including DFO) from 1984 to 2013. Liz, an expert on DMNS and City Park history, was image archivist at the museum and curated some 800,000 images during her tenure.

The Bailey archives occupy about 80 boxes of photographs, films, and articles, much of which is now digitized. A prolific note-taker, photographer, and lecturer, Bailey was a major early pioneer in the use of cinematography (and photography in general) in ornithology.

Further details and dates of Bailey's career can be found in the December *Lark Bunting* excellent summary, and also in the obituary published in the 1981 *Auk* 98:173–175, available at the Searchable Ornithological Research Archive (SORA) <https://sora.unm.edu/sites/default/files/journals/auk/v098no1/p0173-p0175>.

Bailey's credo was that fieldwork is the lifeblood of a natural history museum, and he was an avid field explorer. The bulk of Kris's and Liz's lively presentation was a documentary of Bailey's field expeditions.

They started with the first in 1912 when he voyaged to Laysan Island with the U.S. Biological Survey to help exterminate rabbits that were threatening the island's endemic birds, half of which later became extinct.

His last major field trip was to Botswana, just before his retirement from DMNS in 1969.

Best of all, Kris and Liz illustrated the extensive catalog of field trips with images from the Bailey archives. These demonstrated Bailey's adventurous nature. They read selections from Bailey's notes on the expeditions.

Notable among the field expeditions was a 16-month sojourn in the Arctic in 1921–1922. There he amassed an extensive photo collection of indigenous peoples and in addition trained them, and non-indigenous hunters as well, in the preparation of museum specimens. This training resulted in a wealth of data from remote Arctic territories over many years.

In 1926, Bailey embarked on a 2,000 mile expedition in Ethiopia by mule, led by William Osgood of the Field Museum in Chicago where Bailey then worked. Collecting some 4,000 bird and animal specimens along the way, including the first ibex, the trip took seven months and included a meeting with Haile Selassie, then Ethiopia's regent.

Bailey is remembered by ornithologists for the two-volume *Birds of Colorado* (1965, with Robert Niedrach) and *Birds of Arctic Alaska* (1948), among many other (200+) publications. Kris and Liz indicated that a biography of Bailey is in the works. We're looking forward to it.

Field Trips

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Red Rocks Park

Sunday, January 24

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

George Mayfield & Karen Drozda (Email: georgemayfield@gmail.com Phone: 720-289-9395)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Trading Post parking lot at Red Rocks Park. Call for directions if this location is unfamiliar to you.

We will be viewing the Trading Post feeders before the park gets busy and hope for views of Golden-crowned Sparrow and possibly rosy-finches if it is snowy.

We will walk around Red Rocks Park looking for typical foothills species.

Bring binoculars, snacks, and water. Up to 2 miles of walking on well-maintained trails.

We may also check out some spots along Bear Creek just upstream from Morrison. **Register online or contact leader.**

Prospect Park

(Wheat Ridge Greenbelt)

Saturday, January 30

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Kathanne Lynch (Email: kathannelynch@gmail.com Phone: 303-968-4750)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go one mile west.

Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

This trip is around several small lakes and along Clear Creek. Bring snacks and water. Dress for the weather.

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Who's on Board? *Chris Rurik*

Joe Roller

This is the second in a series of interviews with the hard-working directors on our DFO board.

I first met Chris Rurik in 2013, soon after he moved to Denver from Washington state.

In August of that year we birded at Bluff Lake Nature Center, where Chris leads students on field trips, and there we found his “life” Yellow-breasted Chat.

We began traveling together, chasing reported rarities with terrible luck, and Chris began keeping a list of birds we tried for but missed, a futility index titled, “Species I searched for with Joe but never saw.”

I introduced Chris to Candice Johnson and Bill Wuerthele on the DFO Nominating Committee, and they recognized that he would round out our board with his youthful perspective, writing skills, and zeal for a youth birding program.

Chris was elected to the DFO Board at our April 2015 annual meeting and has been working with Karen von Saltza's Field Trip Committee.

Joe: Chris, tell me a bit about yourself, please.

Chris: Where to start? I'm a native Puget Sounder, born and raised in Gig Harbor, Washington, and hold the Tacoma area special in my heart.

For eight years I've been writing the history of my great-grandfather's farm, a collection of timber, fields, blueberries, and pebbly shoreline that has been in the family for 80 years.

That's my labor of love, a quest that often feels quixotic, and the book should be ready for publication



Chris Rurik. *Mimi Chau*

in 2016. As a side note, I've seen 113 bird species on the farm so far.

I was lucky enough to study English and Geology at Stanford—and to study the West from an early age as a camper and road-tripper.

Most of my work is also as a writer. I write histories of organizations and have done some freelance journalism. I like to examine landscapes and the people in them.

Joe: Can you give an example?

Chris: Last August I cycled from Portland to San Francisco and wrote a series of blog posts for National Geographic about Oregon's new marine reserves and the communities around them.

Here's a link to the first post: <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2014/10/13/journeying-oregons-new-marine-reserves-by-bike-cape-falcon-part-1-of-5/>.

My other jobs are as an environ-

mental educator at Bluff Lake Nature Center and as a financial educator for Independent Means, Inc.

I also have the privilege of serving as a director for The Russell Family Foundation, which funds environmental programs, local leadership development, and education in the Puget Sound area.

I read a lot, cycle a lot, and try to put myself around interesting people. I hope to write my first

novel soon.

Lastly, I must mention my new project, GARO (<http://www.garostation.com/>), an online outpost for the Rocky Mountain Land Library that will publish art, writing, poetry, and audio that connects people with the land around them.

We're currently collecting submissions and will launch in late January. Browsing GARO will be like sitting around a campfire and swapping stories with all kinds of characters. Submit and spread the word!

Joe: Chris, I understand that congratulations are in order.

Chris: Yes! I'm newly engaged to an amazing woman named Mimi. She's in medical school at CU and makes me better in a hundred ways. She has been known to join the occasional DFO field trip.

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Joe: How did you get interested in birds, Chris?

Chris: I had moved back to the family farm the winter after graduating college, where I spent most days writing in a cabin overlooking Puget Sound.

I'd always been aware of nature around me, but hadn't paid specific attention to birds until I aimed binoculars over the water and was flabbergasted by the sight of a loon. I loved loons. I had no idea they were all around where I had grown up.

Then I looked into a tree and was stunned by a Townsend's Warbler. Then a trip to the library, three field guides, *The Big Year*, *Kingbird Highway*, my first Christmas Bird Count in Tacoma, and it was all downhill from there!

Joe: What was it like to move to Colorado, with its unique avifauna?

Chris: I like to tell people that Colorado's the most exciting state in which I've birded. I love finding rarities, and they come from all directions in Colorado. I also love the habitat extremes, from the eastern plains to the mountain talus slopes.

Joe: What about DFO has appealed to you, Chris?

Chris: The sense of camaraderie. About a month after I moved to Denver, I biked out to Rocky Mountain Arsenal, a circuitous and tiring ride on my janky old bike. I was collecting my wits and pulling my binoculars out of my backpack at the contact station when a white van pulled up. Twelve birders spilled out.

"Have you seen the bird?" they asked. "Uh, what bird?" I answered. They swept me toward the feeders, where we saw not one but two Harris's Sparrows. Then they carried me along with them for the next hour, explaining they were on a DFO field trip.

That was the first I'd heard of the organization. Since then, I have met so many great people through DFO. And I really like how keen the members are to learn new things through the evening programs and *The Lark Bunting*.

Joe: What is DFO doing that interests you the most?

Chris: Youth birding! DFO has wanted to set up a youth program for years, and I'm taking it on myself as a DFO board member and Bluff Lake educator to jumpstart the conversation.

I'll be working with a variety of organizations over the next few months to see who can bring what kinds of expertise to the table. Imagine this: fifty avid kids at each DFO meeting. Or this: a team of kid birders challenge us old fogeys to a birding competition.

As an educator I see many, many kids who are itching to get out and explore nature—the same itch that we feel as birders—and a youth birding club would give them that opportunity.

Joe: Thank you, Chris, and welcome to the board!

Field Trips

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Hopefully it won't be too cold so there will be open water for some nice duck viewing. **Register online or contact leader.**

South Platte River Trail at E 88th Ave and I-76

**Sunday, January 31
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Ira Sanders & Tammy Sanders
(Email: zroadrunner14@gmail.com Phone: 303-278-7172)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the parking area at 88th Ave and South Platte River Trail.

From I-76 take E 88th Ave exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles, then turn south at Colorado Blvd.

Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead.

We will see plenty of ducks, a few raptors, and some hearty winter residents.

Hike along paved trails at 88th and 74th Ave and occasionally in the adjacent mud.

Dress for river and riparian temperatures and weather. Be prepared to carry water/drink, snacks, binoculars, and scopes on the trail.

Register online or contact leader.

**—Scheduled by
Mary Cay Burger**

Effects of bison on bird communities in northern New Mexico

by Richard P. Reading and Brian Miller

Bison are an iconic presence on the Great Plains. A “keystone species,” these ecosystem engineers modify the places they live, creating habitat for a wide variety of other species.

In northern New Mexico, we’ve found that bison eliminate intrusive piñon pine, juniper, yucca, and cholla.

Bison use grasslands differently than cattle, leading to a greater diversity of vegetation and vegetation height. What does this mean for birds?

Some conservationists suggest that the switch from bison to cattle grazing adversely affected some native species. For example, grassland birds have declined more than any other group of birds in North America.

So, might returning bison to the Great Plains range help restore native wildlife and habitats? We set out to find the answers to these questions with support from the DFO.

American bison once numbered around 30 million animals and declined dramatically when cattle were introduced. Yet bison numbers are now increasing across North America.

More recently conservationists have begun restoring “conservation herds.” Conservation herds strive to maintain more natural age and sex ratios, use less fencing, and use little to no supplemental feed.

In late 2012, the Denver Zoo assumed management of the newest unit in the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System, the Rio Mora NWR in northern New Mexico.

In an innovative partnership, the Denver Zoo became the first non-governmental organization to manage a NWR.

The prior owner, Wind River Foundation, reintroduced bison to



Bison bison. Denver Zoo

the ranch in partnership with tribes from northern NM.

Just before the creation of Rio Mora NWR, the Pueblo of Pojoaque assumed ownership of all bison on the property.

The Pojoaque hope to increase their bison herd to conserve their cultural and ecological heritage.

They use bison meat to provide food for the poor and as a low fat alternative to beef to help them battle the high rates of diabetes that afflict their people.

Furthermore, they use the head and coats of the bison to make costumes for their bison dancers.

We studied bird communities using randomly located survey points on both the refuge and a nearby commercial cattle ranch.

During these surveys, researchers stand quietly at random points for five minutes after sunrise or before sunset and count birds.

Sadly, we never collected enough data to allow us to estimate bird

population sizes, but we did get enough data to look at the number, diversity, and evenness of the species.

So what did we find? The differences in number of species were relatively small and favored pastures with bison in all seasons except spring, when we found more species of birds on cattle pastures.

However, better measures of diversity take into account the abundance of different species, not simply the number of species.

Most people would argue that a pasture with 100 individuals equally divided

among 10 different species is more diverse than a pasture with 10 species in which one species accounted for 91 individuals and the other nine species accounted for just one individual each.

We found relatively small differences, but slightly higher diversity and evenness on pastures with cattle for all seasons, except winter.

So, while bison pastures supported more species and more total individuals, fewer species tended to dominate the number of individuals observed.

To make more definitive statements, we require more data and additional sites where we could replicate the work conducted on Rio Mora. We are working to find a suitable graduate student to take over our work, and one from Colorado State University appears interested. Stay tuned for those exciting results over the next few years!

Complete results with tables and figures from this research are at <http://dfobirds.org/Grants/GrantReports/21.pdf>.

Denver Urban Christmas Bird Count

Friday, January 1, 2016

Count Leader/Compiler: Hugh Kingery (303-814-2723)

A holiday tradition—everyone welcome: beginners, intermediate, and advanced. The more eyes we have, the more birds we see. And we like to encourage people to get involved.

Start the New Year with a half day or whole day effort—a good way to start your New Year's List!

The count covers a 15-mile diam-

eter circle that includes the Platte River from north Denver city limits to Mississippi St., west to Buckley Field and Rocky Mountain Arsenal.

The "count circle" is subdivided into 14 "count areas" each with a leader. Area locations and contact numbers of Area Leaders are listed below.

Contact Area Leaders for meeting times and places on count day,

Friday, January 1.

Compilation (and potluck) meeting: 5 p.m., Casey Davenport's home, 415 South High St. (5 blocks west of University Ave., about 2 blocks south of Alameda).

Please call Urling (303-814-2723) so we can count you in on the chili pot, Urling's brownies, Casey's hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie, or finger foods.

Area Location	Leader	Phone
South Platte (south) (to Confluence Park, some walking)	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
South Platte (central) (Confluence Park to Riverside Cemetery, some walking)	Casey Davenport	303-744-0613
South Platte (north) (walking)	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
Lower Sand Creek/Commerce City/Montbello (some walking)	Mike Serruto	303-377-9870
Aurora, Tollgate Creek, Upper Sand Creek/ Bluff Lake (walking)	Buzz Schaumburg	303-478-4641
Cherry Creek, dam to University Blvd. (7-mile walk)	Paul Slingsby paslingsby@comcast.net	303-422-3728
Cherry Creek Res. (some walking)	Mary Cay Burger mcburger3@juno.com	303-940-8394
SE Denver, N/Hampden (walking)	Mary Keithler mkeithler@gmail.com Harriet Stratton hstra10@comcast.net	303-771-1421 303-941-7009 cell 303-798-9924
Kent School, S/Hampden (some walking)	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
City Park/Park Hill (car, some walking)	Kevin Corwin	720-482-8454
Botanic Gardens, Wash. Park, Denver Country Club (car, some walking)	Marilyn Rhodes Bob Santangelo	303-674-9895 303-477-1367
Rocky Mtn. Arsenal (car, some walking)	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
Fairmount, Lowry Field (car, some walking)	Tuesday Birders	303-979-6211
Denver Zoo	Brad Parks	Closed

62nd Denver Christmas Bird Count – Saturday, December 19, 2015

Count Leader/Compiler: Joey Kellner (303-978-1748), vireo1@comcast.net

Feeder Coordinator: Bob Shade (303-975-2476), wrshade3@gmail.com

Potluck Coordinator: Cheryl Teuton (303-912-3341), please call her with what dish you can bring.

Compilation (and potluck) meeting: 5 p.m., Chatfield State Park Headquarters (south side of the lake near the Heronry Overlook); **State Parks vehicle entry pass required**. Please carpool if possible. Ask your Area Leader about Compiler's offer for reimbursement.

All are encouraged to participate in the annual Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) sponsored the National Audubon Society. To participate, call one of the Area Leaders listed below to assist in a particular area, or call the Count Compiler (contact info above) if you would like to help in an area that still needs additional observers. After a day in the field, all participants are invited to attend the compilation meeting to feast, warm up, chat with other birders, and find out how the count fared. It is a lot of fun. The compilation meeting will be at 5 p.m. (see location above). **Feel free to bring a dish or desert to share!**

Fees: None! So, no excuses! Come have a great time and help count birds! Beginners and experts all welcome!

The 15-mile diameter "count circle" is subdivided into 24 "count areas" each with a leader. Area locations and names and phone numbers of Area Leaders are listed below. Participants should contact Area Leaders for count day meeting times and places.

Area Number and Location	Area Leader	Phone Number
1. Red Rocks Park	Dan Stringer	720-854-5911
2. Lower Bear Creek	Michael Kiessig	303-909-5169
2A. Bear Creek Lake Park	Mark Amershek	303-329-8646
3. Bow Mar/Marston	Chris Rurik	253-225-7104
4A. Lower South Platte - East	Ed Holub	303-979-2194
4B. Lower South Platte - West	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
5. Highline Ditch	Nancy Crews	303-791-8276
6. Plum Creek	Norm Erthal	303-917-2596
7A. Middle South Platte - West	Charlie Lawrence	303-795-9126
7B. Middle South Platte - East	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
8. Chatfield State Park	Joey Kellner	303-978-1748
9. Upper South Platte *	Jill Holden	720-288-4018
10. Lower Deer Creek	Steve Stachowiak	303-791-4974
11. Upper Deer Creek	Paul Slingsby	303-422-3728
12. Yegge Peak	Ann Bonnell	303-979-6211
13. Doublehead Mountain	Amy Davis	303-549-7759
14. North Turkey Creek	Ed Furlong	303-956-8321
15. Indian Hills	Dick Prickett	303-674-0217
16. Upper Bear Creek	Laura Steadman	843-319-5086
17. Ken Caryl Ranch	Tom Bush	303-919-5040
18. Garrison Gate	TBD	
19. Morrison/Willowbrook	Dean Shoup	720-272-9042
20. Willow Creek	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
21. Mount Lindo/Willow Springs	Bob Shade	303-975-2476

* to participate in this area, you must contact the area leader no later than Monday, December 14th.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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January	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

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Candice Johnson candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org

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Photos and discussion facebook.com/groups/dfobirds

COBirds

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Mary Keithler mkeithler@yahoo.com

Backup contact, Dave Hill d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome, new members: Doug Aird, Englewood; Jesse and Renee Casias, Lakewood; Mindy and David Densmore, Englewood; Lana and Jay Doyle, Lakewood; Sondra Bland and Bob Spencer, Erie; Kathleen Stewart, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Bill Schmoker
"Birding to the
North Pole" Jan. 25, 2016

Garth Spellman,
DMNS Curator
of Ornithology
TBD Feb. 22, 2016

Chuck Hundertmark
and Bob Stocker
"Double-crested
Cormorant: Exemplar
of Human/Wildlife
Conflict" Mar. 28, 2016

Nathan Pieplow
TBD Apr. 25, 2016

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 25
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 40
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$ 5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

Effects of Bison

Who's on Board?

Christmas Counts



The Lark Bunting

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HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG

Field Trips

South Platte River Trail at E 88th Ave and I-76 Saturday, February 6 7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Mark Amershek (Email: mamershek@msn.com Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the parking area at 88th Ave and South Platte River Trail.

From I-76 take E 88th Ave exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles, then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead.

Coleader will be Bruce Neuman. We will see plenty of ducks, a few raptors, and some hardy winter residents.

Hike along paved trail and occasionally in the adjacent mud for up to three miles. **Register online or contact leader.**

Fort Collins area streams and lakes

**Sunday, February 7
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

Paul Slingsby (Email: paslingsby@comcast.net Phone: 303-422-3728)

Continued on page 2

Renew your DFO membership now to stay in the loop for 2016!

Visit dfobirds.org or see the back page of this newsletter.

Journey to the Pole offers unusual birding

Join DFO on January 25 for an exciting presentation by Bill Schmoker about his journey to the North Pole. Bill is a long-time science teacher, master bird photographer, past president of Colorado Field Ornithologists, and a member of the CFO Bird Records Committee.

Last summer and early fall, Bill embarked on the 2015 U.S. Arctic GEO-TRACES Expedition as a PolarTREC teacher. The experience began in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy in early August.

For 65 days this polar icebreaker was home to the Coast Guard crew, 49 scientists, and Bill as they transited the Bering and Chukchi Seas en route to deep water basins of the Arctic Ocean and ultimately the Geographic North Pole. This marked the first time a U.S. surface ship reached the pole unaccompanied. After over a month in the pack ice, the Healy returned to Dutch Harbor in mid-October.

Join Bill on January 25 as he recounts the unusual birding opportunities he was afforded on this journey, along with other wildlife and natural phenomena he experienced to accompany the cutting-edge physical oceanography that the expedition focused on.

The DFO meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Ricketson Auditorium. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting.



Bill Schmoker in front of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy, Makarov Basin, ~198 nautical miles south of N. Pole (86.70°, -149.48°), 14 September 2015. Petty Officer 2nd Class Cory J Mendenhall

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway to carpool.

Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

We will visit ponds and streams in Fort Collins, including Grandview Cemetery. Locations we visit will be determined by recent sightings in the Fort Collins area.

Be prepared to walk 1 or 2 miles. Plan to lunch in a warm restaurant. **Register online or contact leader.**

Northeastern Raptor Tour Saturday, February 13 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Joey Kellner (Email: vireo1@comcast.net Phone: 303-978-1748)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 7

Directions: Meet at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Office, 6060 N Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

Bring lunch, water, and snacks for a full day of driving and watching raptors in the north-eastern corner of Colorado. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County) Sunday, February 14 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

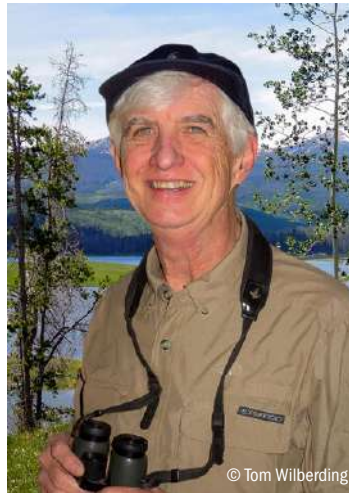
Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP. From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie

Continued on next page

My muse went to Fort Lauderdale



From the President

Joe Roller

As the deadline for this column drew near, I conjured up my Muse for inspiration.

Joe: I'm sorry I didn't get around to this two weeks ago.

Muse: You can be sorry all you want, but it's past my personal deadline.

J: Oh, come on, you haven't failed me yet!

M: No use begging. It's been as cold as a witch digger's brass monkey here, and I need some climate change!

J: No, no! You're syntax is showing. We have plenty of climate change already, what you mean is you need a change of climate.

M: Exactly my point. I'm heading to Fort Lauderdale, so you're on your own this time, buster.

J: But think of the readers!

M: Readers? Don't kid yourself. An octopus could count on one hand how many birders read your drivel.

J: Octopuses don't have hands.

M: It's a figure of speech, dummy, and anyway it's octopi, not octopuses.

J: Now you're embarrassing me. Go on down to Florida. Bask in the sun. Abandon me just when I need you the most. (Pause for pity.) How about I write about the illustrious history of the DFO?

M: Between now and Monday? Try again.

J: How about I describe the foraging techniques of the Great Potoo?

M: Potoo, schmotoo! Keep it local. You're writing for *The Lark Bunting*, not the *Caracas Courier-Post*. How about "The Joy of Birding?"

J: I did that already. Maybe "Lots More Joy of Birding?"

M: That's a reach. Think of a topic a typical DFO member might be intrigued by.

J: Now you're talking, Muse! You're starting to inspire me. Maybe I should say, "You're starting to amuse me."

M: There you go again. Be serious for a change. Bet you can't!

J: You got me there, Muse. You know me too well. Besides, there is no such thing as a "typical DFO member."

M: No such thing?

J: Right. Sure, all of them love birds and birding. But some are photographers. Some keep lists. Or they look at our website. They keep up to date with *The Lark Bunting*.

Some members would not miss a field trip with a favorite leader to a favorite place. Or they like to learn, so they make it to the evening programs. Some are very active; some less so.

Continued on page 3

Immature Short-tailed Albatross, Bering Sea, approx. 132 nm SE of Cape Otvesnyy, Russia (60.23°, -179.04°), 12 August 2015. *Bill Schmoker*



PRESIDENT, continued from page 2

And you know what? We have members who can't do any of those things very often.

M: Can't do any of those things very often? Then why do they keep renewing their memberships?

J: I think that it's because they love birding. It's been a wonderful hobby for them, and they feel at home with the DFO. They want to be sure that we continue organizing field trips that are free and open to the public.

Maybe they remember how Mary or Bob paid special attention to them when they were just starting out. Perhaps they want DFO to be there for other beginners. Maybe they have good hearts.

M: Maybe they have good hearts? Now you've got me all teary-eyed. You're going to make me miss my plane.

J: Muses need airplanes?

M: I could drive, but I need to get back in time to inspire you next month. I can see you'll need a lot of help. I'll be there for you.

J: You old softy! It's almost like you care too.

M: I wouldn't go that far.

J: Hey, see a Florida Scrub-Jay for me. And here's wishing everyone a Happy, Healthy, and Birdy New Year!

Welcome, new members: John Scott Alden, Littleton; Jack and Carla Blair, Lakewood; Maggie Brahm, Denver; Margo Constable, Idledale; Judi Dressler, Louisville; Jim Esten, Denver; Nelson Ford, Littleton; Chris Gray, Denver; Carol Hack, Denver; Holly Heuer, Denver; Gene Hill, Thornton; Elena Klaver, Niwot; Sue Knight, Denver; Lark Latch, Boulder; Linda Lee, Louisville; Taylor Long, Denver; Sharon Minzer, Denver; Pablo Quezada, Denver; Miranda Rinck, Dallas; Roger Rouch, Wheat Ridge; Nicky and Gene Ryan, Aurora; John Sakulich, Arvada; Myron Smith, Greeley; Scott Yanco, Conifer

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half-day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park, over a distance of about three miles.

Trails can be slippery so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt)

Saturday, February 20

9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go one mile west.

Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

This is a trip with easy walking and accessible for mobility-impaired individuals. Bring water and a snack; lunch optional.

Good trip for novice birders and new members. **Register online or contact leader.**

Beebe Draw, Weld Co.

Saturday, February 27

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Chris Goulart (Email: cgoulart001@comcast.net Phone: 586-764-2126)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: Meet at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway to carpool. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to

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Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

Join us for a Raptor Romp! Beebe Draw is a good area for finding raptors in the winter such as Rough-legged Hawk and resident birds.

Bring lunch, although we will likely stop somewhere that food can also be purchased.

Bring binoculars, scopes, snacks, water, and dress for weather. **Register online or contact leader.**

Chase Trip

Sunday, February 28

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Chris Rurik (Email: chrisrurik@gmail.com Phone: 253-225-7104)

Trail Difficulty: Strenuous

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: Meet at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway to carpool.

Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

Leader will be checking the reports of rare birds in the area and planning an exciting route for the day.

Be sure to bring water, all the food you will need, a lunch you can eat in the car, and appropriate clothing.

Scopes will be useful if you have one and binoculars are necessary.

You may find some rarities. Allenspark for rosy-finches will be a backup location. **Register online or contact leader.**

—Scheduled by Chris Owens

Final call for 2016 DFO grant applications

by Candice Johnson

The DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Fund is now accepting applications for grants to encourage the study, appreciation, and preservation of birds and their habitats. Preference will be given to projects in the Denver metropolitan area, the Front Range, the state of Colorado, and the USA, in that order.

Awards typically range from \$500 to \$2000. Recent past grants have included grants to fund student scholarships to birding camps, support research on Clark's Nutcrackers and Flammulated Owls, and to restore prairie habitat for birds at Dodd Reservoir in Boulder County.

Proposals should include a description of goals, a methodology, a complete budget including other funding sources, and an indication of any completed preliminary work.

It is expected that successful grantees will provide a report on their project to be published in *The Lark Bunting* newsletter and on the DFO website, or lead a field trip to the research site, or make a presentation at the monthly meeting.

An application form and a history of past grants awarded are available on the website at <http://dfobirds.org/Grants/>.

Deadline for applications is February 1, 2016. Notification of awards will be made soon after this date.

Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Margaret Arp, Susan Blansett, Jill Boice, Renee and Dan Brachear, Paul Welshinger and Kate Brannan, Tom and Mary Cay Burger, Will Burt, Steve and Nan Campbell, Carol Cochran, Doris Cruze, Jeff Dawson, Dave and Mary Driscoll, Bill Eden, Von Fransen, Ed Furlong, Mary Geder, Newell Grant, Carol Hack, JoAnn and Bill Hackos, Kristine Haglund, J.B. Hayes, David Hill, Jan and Doug Hodous, Marjorie Jannotta and Chuck Hundertmark, Edie Israel, Urling and Hugh Kingery, Kristina Koff, Sandy Kottke, Judy Lane, Linda Lee, Lisa Marshall Swift and Joann Marshall, Sharon Minzer, Michael Wilson and Barbara Nabors, Jim Petri and Christie Owens, Pat and Barney Poole, Joe Roller, Chris Rurik, Micki and Bob Shade, Melissa W Smith, Kathryn and Steve Smith, Mary Ann Tavery, Jennifer and Charles Thornton-Kolbe, Nancy and Bill Urquhart, Jan Justice Waddington, Laura and Wayne Wathen, Liz and Lynn Willcockson, Jeremy Winick, Mary Zick

Flammulated Owl study addresses habitat associations

by Max Ciaglo and Ross Calhoun

This past fall brought to a close the third year of our Flammulated Owl migration study.

Since 2013 we have been trapping Flammulated Owls after the breeding season on Colorado's Pike National Forest (PNF), and since 2014 this effort has been made possible by the generosity of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO) Grants Fund.

The Flammulated Owl is a small raptor that breeds in dry montane forests from central Mexico to British Columbia and subsists primarily on moths.

The species' insectivorous diet forces northern populations south during winter months to locations where climates are mild enough to support the insect life that they need to survive.

As a result, winter records of the species range from central Mexico to as far south as El Salvador.

In recent years the species has received increased attention due to a lack of data on population trends as well as its close association with older conifer forests, which are becoming increasingly younger, denser, and more fragmented due to fire suppression and habitat alteration.

Research has shown that breeding owls are strongly associated with yellow pine—especially ponderosa pine—throughout their range.

But habitat associations during migration and winter months are still poorly understood.

In 2013, in association with Dr. Brian Linkhart and the Colorado College Venture Grant Fund, we began to address this gap of knowledge by trapping Flammulated Owls after the breeding season on the PNF.

In 2014, after receiving funds from the DFO, we were able to triple our netting efforts and greatly expand the scope of our investigation.

Now we are incredibly happy to report on another successful season funded by the DFO Grants Fund.

This fall we captured a total of 71 birds, compared to 66 individuals in 2014, and 18 from our initial efforts in 2013.

Of these 71 birds, ten were recaptured within this fall season,

Continued on page 6



Max Ciaglo and Ross Calhoun take feather measurements on a Flammulated Owl.



Ross Calhoun erects a mist net. *Michael Ciaglo*

and another three individuals were caught that had been banded in previous years. With these captures, we have now reported the highest rate of recapture among all similar studies investigating the fall migratory movements of Flammulated Owls.

Recapturing previously banded birds is one of the most important goals of any migration study, as recaptures often provide rare and valuable long-term data about the movement and habitat use of avian populations.

The ten birds recaptured within the fall of 2015, along with seven similarly recaptured birds from previous years, give us evidence that ponderosa pine dominated forests are being used by Flammulated Owls for extended periods of time after the breeding season.

The reasons for this may vary, but it is likely that these individuals are using this time to build fat stores either before or during their migration—a behavior crucial to long-term survival.

Two adult owls first caught in 2014, and another adult from 2013, were all recaptured this year at similar dates to their initial captures.

Data from these recaptures suggest that Flammulated Owls may show fidelity to migratory or premigratory grounds within breeding habitat.

If these findings are further supported, we might infer that Flammulated Owls depend on larger, more interconnected pine forests throughout their annual life cycle than the literature currently suggests.

Flammulated Owls have been deemed an indicator species, meaning that the health of their populations can be used to estimate the health of old ponderosa pine ecosystems.

Our work to better understand the movements of these owls will improve this approximation and add clarity to the relationship between the health of owl populations and that of Colorado's forests.

Moving forward, we plan to con-

textualize our findings by determining if our birds originated locally or from more northern populations.

With this data, we hope to further inform our understanding of the full scope of habitat use by this sensitive species in an effort to aid in the development of effective management practices.

Observations such as ours, and the ability to ask these broad ecological questions, are only attainable through continued and consistent efforts across multiple years.

Our research over the past two years would not have been possible without the DFO.

We cannot begin to express our gratitude for their support and look forward to updating the organization as our study progresses.

Next year we aim to continue our work in the PNF, adding more bands to this population and hopefully seeing more bands returned as we continue to investigate this understudied life stage of an incredible Colorado bird.

All photographs taken by Michael Ciaglo



Ross Calhoun takes data on a captured owl.



Affixing an identification band to a young owl.

62nd Annual Denver Christmas Bird Count

Day, Date, and Time: **Saturday, December 19, 2015, 6:50 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Compiler: **Joey Kellner** Feeder Coordinator: **Bob Shade**

Weather: **Mostly clear all day** Temperature: **19 to 61° F** Wind: **variable, 0 to 25 mph**

Snow Cover: **0 to 18"** Still Water: **Frozen to partly open** Moving Water: **Partly open**

Observers: **232 (222 in 27 parties, 10 watchers at 10 feeders)**

Total Party Hours: **252.73 (155.38 on foot, 60.35 by car, 37 feeder watching)**

Total Party Miles: **454.50 (104.1 on foot, 383.4 by car)**

Hours Spent Watching Feeders: **37.0**

Count Day Totals: **101 species; 27,503 individuals**

Area Participants (Area Leader's names in **bold**)

1. Red Rocks Park (RRP): Tom Behnfield, Bob Brown, Tom Casaderall, Karlee Gatewood, **Dan Stringer**
2. Lower Bear Creek (LBC): Chuck Aid, Rick Creswell, Martha Eubanks, David Gillilan, Diane Hutton, **Michael Kiessig**, Kathanne Lynch, Mike McAteer, George Mayfield, Kacie Miller, Wendy Wibbens
- 2A. Bear Creek Lake Park (BCP): **Mark Amershek**, Carol Cook, Mary Geder, A.J. Gest, Chris Gilbert, Chris Goulart, Keith Hidalgo, Rebecca Laroche, Bruce Neumann, Pam Zimmer
3. Bow Mar/Marston (BMM): Van Chau, Peggy Gonder, Candice Johnson, Tim Johnson, Betsy Maslow, Richard Maslow, Joe Roller, **Chris Rurik**
- 4A. Lower South Platte-east (LSP): Nelson Ford, **Ed Holub**, Scott Somershoe
- 4B. Lower South Platte-west (LSP): Amy Cervene, Chris Gray, Alec Hopping, Bill Hopping, Pamela Munroe, Ben Sampson, **Dick Schottler**, Christopher Warneke
5. Highline Ditch (HLD): **Nancy Crews**, Michele Danforth, Susan Dunn, Pam Schmidt
6. Plum Creek (PCK): Jesse Casias, Renee Casias, **Norm Erthal**, Chris Owens, Cheryl Teuton
- 7A. Middle South Platte (MSP): Burke Angstman, Joey Angstman, Tim Angstman, Daniel Horton, **Charles Lawrence**
- 7B. Middle South Platte (MSP): Alan Haggard, **Hugh Kingery**, **Urling Kingery**, Robert Martinez, Deb Ostergard, Polly Reetz, Darrin Seex, Mike Serruto, Kara Soitler, Maikel Wise, Susan Wise
8. Chatfield Reservoir (CHA): Sandra Bland, Dan Brooke, Mike Foster, **Joey Kellner**, Steve Meier, Bob Spencer
9. Upper South Platte (USP): Betty Glass, **Jill Holden**, Mary Keithler
10. Lower Deer Creek (LDC): Sarah Braun, Scott Dieni, John Esperance, Stephanie Jones, Patrick O'Driscoll, Matt Ramlow, **Steve Stachowiak**, Lynn Willcockson
11. Upper Deer Creek (UDC): Lee Ferrell, Linda Ferrell, John Harrington, Norm Lewis, Nina Routh, **Paul Slingsby**
12. Yegge Peak (YPK): **Audrey Boag**, **Celia Greenman**, Linda Knudsen, Walt Knudsen, Mike Seal
13. Doublehead Mountain (DHM): **Amy Davis**, Nancy Davis, Tim Davis, Adam Green
14. North Turkey Creek (NTC): Susan Blansett, **Ed Furlong**, Gregg Goodrich, Ann Troth
15. Indian Hills (IHL): Brad Andres, Caroline Gilbert, Michael Gilbert, Susan Harper, Bob Holmes, JoNell How, Elaine Lockey, Paul Luzetski, **Dick Prickett**, Warren Roske, Bob Santangelo, Jeanette Strom, Karen von Saltza, Diane Young
16. Upper Bear Creek (UBC): Melissa Mezger, **Laura Steadman**
17. Ken Caryl Ranch (KCR): Ruth Gabraski, **David Suddjian**, Sherry Uhlemann, Ted Uhlemann, Bea Weaver
18. Garrison Gate (GGT): Area not covered this year.
19. Morrison/Willow Brook (MWB): David Dowell, **Dean Shoup**, Douglas Watkins
20. Willow Creek (WCK): Tami Bishop, **Doris Cruze**, Karen Hochgraf, Barbara Shissler, Peggy Wait
21. Mt. Lindo/Willow Springs (MLW): Steve Kingswood, **Bob Shade**

A special thanks to the Count Roving Expert and Photographer—**Glenn Walbek**

Snowy Owl highlights 2015 Denver Christmas Bird Count

by *Joey Kellner, Compiler*

The 2015 Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) took place on December 19th.

This is the 62nd consecutive year that the Denver Field Ornithologists has conducted a Christmas Count within the same 15-mile diameter count circle established in 1954 and centered just north of the old Ken Caryl Ranch entrance.

The weather on count day started mostly clear with low to high winds. It was a beautiful day to be out with the team reporting a respectable 27,503 individual birds of 101 species recorded by 222 field observers and 10 feeder watchers.

One new species was added to the cumulative Denver CBC list in 2015, Snowy Owl. The grand total of species seen since 1954 thus increased to 200!

(See Area Totals at http://dfobirds.org/Documents/History/CBC/2015_Denver_CBC_Summary.pdf)

Record-high individual numbers were established for six species this year: Redhead (377), Common Merganser (4,145), Cooper's Hawk (14), Snowy Owl (1), Northern Saw-whet Owl (8), Brown Creeper (61).

The ten most numerous species observed on the 2015 count were (1) Canada Goose (7,134), (2) Common Merganser (4,145), (3) Mallard (1,661), (4) Red-winged Blackbird (1,074), (5) American Crow (1,036), (6) Dark-eyed Junco (943), (7) House Finch (941), (8) European Starling (804), (9) Black-billed Magpie (734), (10) American Robin (609).

Together, these ten species accounted for 69.3% of the birds counted.

Four additional "Count Week"

species were noted in the three days on either side of count day: Greater White-fronted Goose on Johnson Reservoir at Clement Park, Ruddy Duck seen on South Platte Park Reservoir, Ferruginous Hawk in South Valley Park (Ken Caryl Valley), and a well photographed Green-tailed Towhee at Bear Creek Lake Park.

Making an overall count of 105 species for the circle this year!

As compiler of the 62nd Denver Christmas Bird Count, I thank all of the field observers and feeder watchers for participating.

Special thanks go to the Area Leaders whose efforts and knowl-

edge make this count a success and to Cheryl Teuton and Dan Brooke who did an amazing job of coordinating this year's potluck.

Thank you Bob Shade for contacting, coordinating, and compiling all the Feeder Watcher data.

Thanks also to Colorado Parks and Wildlife for the use of the Chatfield State Park Multipurpose Room for our compilation meeting.

Lastly, thanks to all who brought drinks and food to share! Sharing food and friendship after a day in the field was a great way to relax before the holidays.

I hope to see you all at the compilation next year!

Steve Stachowiak found an evening **SNOWY OWL** just inside Chatfield State Park's south entrance (Roxborough Road entrance)! The bird was seen as Steve was leaving the park after the potluck! A first ever for the Denver CBC!

Other "Rare" birds (seen on less than 10% of the previous counts) and found this year included:

- White-winged Scoter (only the 6th time recorded on the Denver CBC) found in Area 4A (Lower South Platte) on McClellan Reservoir;
- Bonaparte's Gull (only the 2nd time recorded on the count) found in Area 8 (Chatfield Reservoir);
- Northern Saw-whet Owl (6th time recorded on the count) found in Areas 10 (Lower Deer Creek), 12 (Yegge Peak), and 17 (Ken Caryl Ranch); and
- Hermit Thrush (6th time recorded on the count) found in Area 8 (Chatfield Reservoir).

"Uncommon" birds (seen 10–24% of the previous counts) found this year included:

- Cackling Goose (multiple areas—split and tracked starting in 2004),
- Long-tailed Duck (found in Area 8—Chatfield Reservoir),
- Eurasian Collared-Dove (multiple areas—recent explosive addition to the annual count),
- Say's Phoebe (Area 10—Lower Deer Creek), and
- Lesser Goldfinch (several individuals found in two count areas and at feeder watchers' homes).

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February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
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August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

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	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

It's time to renew DFO membership for 2016!

Renew online at <http://dfobirds.org> with your credit card,
or by filling out and mailing the application on the back page.

Upcoming Speakers

Bill Schmoker

“Birding to the

North Pole” Jan. 25, 2016

Garth Spellman,

DMNS Curator

of Ornithology

TBD Feb. 22, 2016

Chuck Hundertmark

and Bob Stocker

“Double-crested

Cormorant: Exemplar

of Human/Wildlife

Conflict” Mar. 28, 2016

Nathan Pieplow

TBD Apr. 25, 2016

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Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic *The Lark Bunting*) \$ 25

☐ Annual family membership (mailed *The Lark Bunting*) \$ 40

☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21) \$ 5

☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver CBC Highlights

Flammulated Owl Study

President's Muse

Featured This Month

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/MARCH 2016/VOL 52 NO 3

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://DFOBIRDS.ORG)

Field Trips

Barr Lake State Park Saturday, March 5 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Bob Shade (Email: wrshade3@gmail.com Phone: 303-975-2476)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 20

Directions: Meet at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass or day pass required.

From Denver, take east I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Rd, then turn south for ~2 miles to park entrance and follow road to Visitor Center.

This will be a 3/4 day trip including the southeast and north-east lakesides, below the dam, and maybe a brief cruise around country roads for raptors.

Take lunch and dress for the weather. A few radios would be helpful. Target birds are waterfowl, Bald Eagles, raptors.

Register online or contact leader.

South Platte Park and Carson Nature Center Sunday, March 6 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Sue Summers (Email: summerssue@hotmail.com Phone: 253-678-3721)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at Carson Nature Center, north of Mineral Ave, 1 block west of S Santa Fe Drive.

The river and lakes near the Carson Nature Center hold a variety of waterfowl including a

Continued on page 2

Do birds and humans prefer same music?

From the soft mournful *coo* of a Mourning Dove to the complex overtones of the Hermit Thrush song, birders and nonbirders are drawn to the beauty of birdsong.

The beauty of birdsong has inspired human poetry and prose and also provided the foundation for musical composition from classical music to rock and roll.

But have you ever wondered why birdsong appeals to us? Does birdsong have musical properties? If so, is it possible that human and avian preference for musical aesthetics evolved to appreciate similar musical properties?

In his talk to DFO on February 22, Dr. Garth M. Spellman, Curator of Ornithology at DMNS, will try to answer these questions. The talk will explore the anatomy of the avian vocal structure, the syrinx, and its potential as a musical instrument as well as its similarities with human-made instruments.

He will play recordings of birdsong that uses musical scales commonly used in human music and juxtapose the birdsong with musical pieces inspired by the same birdsong.

Finally he will discuss birdsong as communication and evaluate what message the signaler is trying to send and what qualities of the message the recipient is evaluating.

Hopefully, in the end, the talk will instill in you a new appreciation for the beauty of birdsong. If not, you will still hear some pretty amazing things!

The DFO meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Ricketson Auditorium. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting.



Common Redpoll at Ira and Tammy Sanders home, Golden, CO, 17 December 2015. Still there as of 7 February 2016. *Ira Sanders*

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

nice mix of ducks, grebes and mergansers. Also possible are sparrows and several raptor species.

Our exact route will depend on the condition of the trails but be prepared to walk up to two miles. Bring water, binoculars, a scope if you have one.

Register online or contact leader.

Denver City Park (Denver County)

**Saturday, March 12
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Bill Wuerthele (Email: wuerthel@ecentral.com
Phone: 303-333-2519)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the parking strip southeast of 22nd Ave just north of Ferril Lake.

From Colorado Blvd, turn west onto 22nd Ave and go past the Museum of Nature and Science. Turn left just before the zoo at the sign to the Pavilion Bandstand.

Park on the left at the end of the parking area closest to Ferril Lake.

We will look for gulls and waterfowl on Ferril Lake and spend time at the Duck Lake Cormorant Rookery.

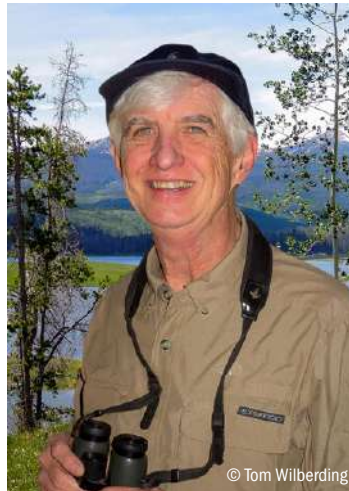
The Cormorants should be back, providing interesting viewing and good photo opportunities.

Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, water, and snacks. Beginning birders welcome.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on next page

Another fable for our times



From the President

Joe Roller

Etiquette Rule Number Two: Approach the Scene Quietly when a Birder is Looking at a Bird.

Most authorities strongly suggest adherence to this rule, but as we see below, great things can happen when it is broken.

It was a dark and stormy night. But the next day dawned clear and soon came a sunny, summer morning.

Joseph Heaven^a was afield, peering at every part of every pond. Soon he arrived at the crown jewel, the famous marsh near the Fortmon Feedlot^b, with its bovinity of incipient Big Macs.

What a nice day at the pond. In the cattails Marsh Wrens scolded, Yellow-headed Blackbirds strangled, and dabbling ducks

(Mallard, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, and even a nice drake Northern Pintail) dabbled.

In the deep part of the lake diving ducks (Bufflehead, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Duck) dived. Scanning the edge of the marsh through his scope, Joe saw a pair of Pied-billed Grebes, a whistling-duck, and a few coots.

Wait a minute! A whistling-duck? A possible first state record! With a pounding heart, which gave rise to a pounding pulse, Joseph trembled, adjusted his scope and studied every aspect of the bird, including the whistle.

With its funny shape, tawny color, dark back, grayish bill, and unique dark stripe on nape of the long neck, this must be a Fulvous Whistling-Duck. Wow! A first state record!

Thinking quickly, he contacted his friend, Jerry Alexandria^c, who rushed to the spot, and as etiquette requires, drove up cautiously and moved slowly to where Joseph stood.

They peered through their telescopes, savoring the Fulvous Whistling-Duck! But would the Records Committee accept their description? If only they could see additional field marks.

Jerry had spread the word, hoping that other birders could creep up quietly and confirm the ID. Aha! In the distance three SUVs lurched around a turn. The lead vehicle sported the tell-tale birder's license plate "Garbled Nitwit^d." The convoy was full of excited birders.

Soon the vehicles arrived, screeching to a halt in a cloud of dust and a flight of gravel. (This gravel was about the size of a garbanzo bean, otherwise known as the chick-pea. Its color varied among the various variegated pebbles, with about 50% grayish gravel, 40% brownish pieces, 10% kumquat-colored, and the rest blackish-pale^e).

The birders sprang from their vehicles, field glasses at the ready, and shouted, "Hello!" What a thrill! Doors slammed almost in unison, at about the same time, give or take a fraction of a second, and the percussive effect

Continued on page 3



Pine Grosbeak, Fawn Brook Inn, Allenspark, CO, 16 January 2016. *Norm Lewis*

Annual seed donation much appreciated

Thank you for the birds: A large round of applause to Scott Menough and all at Wild Birds Unlimited (S Wadsworth) for their annual donation of seed for the rosy-finches and other species at the Fawn Brook Inn. Thank you, WBU, for your generosity!

PRESIDENT, continued from page 2

flushed the ducks. See the ducks fly. Fly away birds^f. Specks at the horizon. Heartbreak. Major heartbreak. (Did I mention heartbreak?)

But although the rule of birding etiquette was violated, a great thing happened! As the whistling-duck flew, Joseph and Jerry, glued to their scopes, were able to discern additional field marks—the darkish legs, the white tail band!

Now they could produce a complete description of the mega-rarity, one which the committee would certainly accept. An excellent outcome had resulted from breaking a rule of etiquette.

Shocked at the sight of the rapidly disappearing waterfowl, the newly arrived birders realized that they had “dipped.” In fact, they were the big dippers, and long into the future would their sad story be told.

All of them rued the day when they had broken a key rule of etiquette: “Approach the Scene Quietly when a Birder is Looking at a Bird.”

(See Annotations on page 4.)

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, March 13

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

Daylight Saving Time begins today. Be sure to arrive at the correct time.

This is a half-day trip passing through many important habitats in 3 miles.

Check weather predictions and dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch optional. Beginning birders welcome.

Register online or contact leader.

Chatfield State Park

Saturday, March 19

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Edmund J Holub (Email: edmund.holub@gmail.com
Phone: 303-979-2194)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: Meet at swim beach by entering west entrance of park off S Wadsworth, 1.5 miles south of C-470.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

Half-day trip. Dress for weather. We will be looking for raptors, sparrows, and water birds.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Cherry Creek State Park (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, March 20

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Mary Keithler (Email:
mkeithler@yahoo.com

Phone: 303-771-1421)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 15

Directions: Meet at the west marina parking lot. State Parks pass or day pass required.

We will look for gulls, waterfowl, and a variety of birds.

Habitats include deep water, marshlands, mixed grasses, and cottonwoods.

We will carpool to the various stops and walk 1–2 miles. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, and sunscreen. Scopes are useful.

Be prepared to consolidate into fewer vehicles to allow for easier parking in the smaller lots.

Register online or contact leader.

Roxborough State Park

Sunday, March 20

8:15 AM - 11:00 AM

Doris Cruze (Email: cruzeduo@aol.com Phone: 303-798-8072)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Directions: Take S Wadsworth Blvd past Chatfield SP to Waterton Rd on left.

Take Waterton Rd 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Road. Turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd.

Turn left (east) onto Roxborough Park Rd and then turn immediately right (south) on Roxborough Rd and follow signs to the Park (2.2 miles).

State Parks pass or day pass required.

The hike starts at the Visitor

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: *Polar Adventure*

Tim Johnson

On January 25, a very large crowd suffering from adventure deficit disorder attended Bill Schmoker's talk, "Birding to the North Pole."

Bill, a 23-year science teaching veteran at Boulder's Centennial Middle School, traveled as a teacher sponsored by PolarTREC on an expedition funded by GEOTRACES.

PolarTREC (Teachers and Researchers Exploring and Collaborating) is a program in which K-12 teachers spend 3 to 6 weeks participating in hands-on field research experiences in the polar regions. PolarTREC's goal is to invigorate polar science education and understanding by bringing K-12 educators and polar researchers together.

GEOTRACES, an international research program, focuses on marine biogeochemical cycles of trace elements and isotopes, significant since trace elements are essential micronutrients affecting biological productivity and carbon cycling.

The expedition, on the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker *Healy* lasted 65 days and reached the North Pole on September 5, 2015. It was the first U.S. ship to reach the Pole alone rather than in a pair.

Bill described the expedition's members as "49 scientists, 95 crew, and me." His responsibilities for PolarTREC included outreach (photos, videos, an online journal) and developing knowledge and material useful for school curricula.

His official relationship to the scientists and crew was as a Research Assistant, for which the critical qualification, as I know from experience, is to be a healthy multicellular organism.

The GEOTRACES program involved ocean water sampling and ice core retrieval, which meant manipulation of heavy and expensive equipment under sometimes very trying conditions.

Continued on page 5

Annotations for President Roller's column:

^aJoseph Heaven was in fact Joe Himmel (Himmel is German for "heaven"), and this story is about Joe's great find, years ago, of a Fulvous Whistling-Duck, known as a "tree duck" at the time.

^b This refers to the "Montfort" feedlots east of Greeley, where Joe found the rarity.

^c In fact, this was Jerry Cairo, not Alexandria.

^dGarbled Nitwit" is a play on a Colorado birder's license plate, "GODWIT."

^e "Blackish-pale" is another way of saying "grayish" or "off-white." The suffix "-ish" is heavily used in describing birds. How does one tell greenish-gray from grayish-green?

^f These short sentences were inspired by "Run, Jane, run! See Jane run." from the Dick and Jane stories of the 1950s.

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, *continued from page 4*

Lastly, Bill tried to be a birder, a frustrating activity for most of the expedition since the ship could not stop or slow down for sightings, rendering photography and often identification next to impossible.

In the more northern latitudes, birds were scarce. His list from August 20 to September 5 consisted of one Black-legged Kittiwake and one bird sp. And another dry spell—no birds—occurred between September 10 and 27.

To be fair, Bill had too many other duties to spend much time birding. He had crew members page him if something showed up while he was otherwise busy. On average he had about one hour per day for birding and wildlife observation.

The voyage began at Dutch Harbor, mid-point in the Aleutian Islands, where final preparations took place, which included building a HEPA-filtered clean lab aboard ship.

Bill spent some of his Dutch Harbor time observing Rock Sandpipers, sundry Alcidae, and humpbacked whales from the ocean-view Norwegian Rat Bar. Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches were also common in Dutch Harbor.

The voyage began in earnest on August 9, heading north toward the Bering Strait. During this period Bill logged many pelagic species including the Short-tailed Albatross, once declared extinct but now breeding in small numbers on Torishima and the Senkaku islands south of Japan.

They passed though the Bering Strait, between Big Diomedé (Russia) and Little Diomedé (USA) Islands, to enter the Chukchi Sea. Although Bill recorded Common and Thick-billed Murres here, the birds thinned out upon entering the Chukchi (a young Yellow Wagtail found its way on board, but unfortunately expired). Drift ice began to appear, and on August 18 they encountered walruses.

Soon the *Healy* was actively navigating pack ice, seeking out leads, and breaking through when necessary with its trio of 10,000 horsepower engines (with a spare on tap).

From here to the Pole, as mentioned, birds were lacking, but on August 23 a large, pregnant female polar bear came within 30 meters of the ship and allowed lengthy video (cf. <https://www.polartrec.com/expeditions/us-arctic-geotraces>).

Bill's daily posts, walrus and polar bear videos, magnificent aurora borealis videos, still photos, and much more information about the voyage can be found here.

The *Healy* reached the North Pole on September 5 and spent several days sampling. It was joined by the German icebreaker *Polarstern*, also sponsored by GEOTRACES, and the two crews visited each other and shared data. The *Healy* was on its way back to Dutch Harbor by September 8.

Bird surprises on the return voyage included a Golden-crowned Kinglet, which landed on the ship during the Chukchi Sea traverse, and an errant Pine Siskin.

On September 9, Bill documented the northernmost bird in the eBirds database, a Northern Fulmar, a relatively short distance from the North Pole. The *Healy* arrived at Dutch Harbor on October 11. I'm sure the Norwegian Rat Bar was glad to see Bill again, and vice versa.

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Center. We will walk the Fountain Valley Trail, a 2.3 mile loop trail, looking for the resident Golden Eagles and birds of the foothills such as Spotted Towhees, Western Scrub-Jays, Mountain and Black-capped Chickadees, and Downy Woodpeckers.

There could be some surprises. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks. Dress in layers for changing weather conditions.

Register online or contact leader.

**Barr Lake State Park
Saturday, March 26
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Gregg Goodrich (Email: GreggGoodrich@gmail.com
Phone: 303-655-9135)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass or day pass required.

From Denver, take east I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Rd, then turn south for ~2 miles to park entrance and follow road to Visitor Center.

Bring snacks, lunch, and plenty of water. Trip may be 3/4 day depending on birds and weather.

Trip can be easily modified to be accessible for a person with a disability. Beginners are welcome.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on page 8

Relationship between environmental heterogeneity and the abundance and distribution of shortgrass steppe birds

by Amber Carver

For well over a decade, conservation scientists have been engaged in dialogue on how to reverse declines in North American grassland bird populations¹⁻⁴.

Despite habitat conservation and improvement, many populations continue to decline⁵.

Although the importance of habitat heterogeneity to grassland bird communities has long been recognized^{1,4,6,7}, large-scale application of heterogeneity-centric management has been slow in coming.

As grassland birds become increasingly scarce, rangeland scientists are searching for ways to amend the land management paradigm.

Monitoring the outcome of changes to management practices is vital to gauging the effectiveness of these techniques.

In 2013, I was admitted to the Master of Science program at the University of Colorado Denver.

Collaborators on my master's project included the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies and the USDA Agricultural Research Service.

I received funding from the Denver Field Ornithologists for both years of my project, which went toward a per diem and lodging for undergraduate assistants.

My focus was the importance of habitat heterogeneity to ground-nesting birds. Specifically, I was interested in the extent to which heterogeneity-centric management affects population viability of species that breed on the shortgrass steppe.

The shortgrass steppe is an important breeding ground for several bird species.



McCown's Longspur nest with eggs, Central Plains Experimental Range, Weld Co., CO. 2014. Amber Carver

This bird community evolved in the context of episodic environmental disturbance, including bison grazing and drought, which led to a shifting mosaic of habitat conditions^{4,7}.

The replacement of wild bison with domestic livestock and the tendency toward uniform moderate grazing have resulted in more homogenous habitat that supports fewer bird species⁴.

Supporting the full community of shortgrass steppe birds requires providing an array of habitat conditions, rather than adhering to the one-size-fits-all approach.

In 2014, scientists at the Central Plains Experimental Range (CPER)

in northern Colorado initiated the Adaptive Grazing Management Plan, a long-term project comparing the outcome of season-long uniform ("Traditional") grazing against that of intra-seasonal rotational ("Adaptive") grazing.

The premise is that Adaptive grazing can both support livestock gains and provide habitat for birds.

The goal of my master's research project was to assess the impact of Adaptive grazing on nest success,

and I began monitoring nests during the first year of the grazing project.

During my master's research project (2014 and 2015), I located 576 nests belonging to seven species.

However, the majority of these belonged to only three species: Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*), Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), and McCown's Longspur (*Rhyncophanes mccownii*).

All are migratory open-cup nesters. However, Lark Bunting nests in tall vegetation that has not been recently grazed⁸, while Horned Lark and McCown's Longspur nest in heavily grazed areas dominated by shortgrass and cactus⁹.

Continued on page 7

Among my three primary species, McCown's Longspur is of particular interest because it is restricted to the shortgrass steppe¹⁰.

This species has undergone greater population decline than the other two⁵, and it is now of conservation concern in Colorado and Nebraska.

By contrast, Horned Lark is Holarctic and may breed on alpine¹¹ or arctic¹² tundra in addition to the shortgrass steppe.

Thus, Horned Lark may be considered a shortgrass opportunist, rather than strictly shortgrass-obligate.

Lark Bunting preferentially nests in tall vegetation, but the species is considered a generalist⁶.

This makes McCown's Longspur unique among the three species in its restriction to the shortgrass steppe and its need for recent, heavy grazing.

It is likely that McCown's Longspur followed nomadic bison herds when they were present on the landscape.

In the absence of wide-ranging grazers, McCown's Longspur dis-

tribution may be influenced most by the distribution of rainfall, which drives vegetation growth.

McCown's Longspur nest survival is higher in heavily grazed areas with little or no cover by shrubs¹³.

Nomadism in this species has not been demonstrated scientifically, but McCown's Longspur could avoid regions with heavy rainfall.

During both years of my project, rainfall was above average, and the abundance of McCown's Longspur was markedly low.

My sample was dominated by Lark Bunting, which accounted for 448 of my nests. This mixed-grass specialist was likely taking advantage of abnormally wet conditions in northeastern Colorado.

I realized early in my project that the effects of Adaptive grazing would take many years to unfold and would not become apparent during my master's project.

Instead, I focused on differences in nest-site characteristics and the features driving nest survival.

In 2015, I was admitted to the Uni-

versity of Colorado Denver doctoral program, which will allow me to continue my research at the CPER.

I look forward to continuing to study ground-nesting birds and learn how their abundance and survival is influenced by patterns in habitat and weather.

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Continued on page 8



Male McCown's Longspur, Central Plains Experimental Range, Weld Co., CO. 2014. Amber Carver



Female McCown's Longspur, Central Plains Experimental Range, Weld Co., CO. Banded in 2014 and recaptured 0.15 mi from previous capture site in 2015. Amber Carver

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

**Riverside Cemetery/Platte River, Denver County
Sunday, March 27
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

Kevin Corwin (Email: kevygudguy@aol.com
Phone: 720-482-8454)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Entrance is at 5201 Brighton Blvd in Denver. Gates open at 8 a.m.

Meet the leader at Riverside Cemetery. Park next to the main office building, which is on your right as you enter the property.

This will be an easy hike on flat terrain, though we may walk cross-country down into the wetlands along the Platte and among groves of trees on the west edge of the cemetery.

We may pause to inspect a few of the monuments and markers in the cemetery.

After canvassing the cemetery, we will walk a short distance to the Heron Pond Natural Area.

We will cover somewhere between 1 and 3 miles, depending on the birds and weather.

Bring water, snacks, and whatever optics you choose to use.

Restrooms are available in the maintenance building next to the cemetery office.

Register online or contact leader.

—Scheduled by Bill Wuerthele



Typical Black-billed Magpie eating ticks from elk, Golden, 6 February 2016. Kay Niyo

Renew now to keep newsletter coming

Dues deadline looming! After March 1, we will no longer send out *The Lark Bunting* to those who have not paid their 2016 dues. Please renew at <http://dfobirds.org/DFO/Membership.aspx> where you can pay your dues through PayPal or by check and review your contact information.

If you prefer, go to <http://dfobirds.org/LarkBunting/LB.pdf> and print the last page and mail with your check.

RESEARCH, continued from page 7

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Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Meredith Anderson, Tom Pool and Kitsi Atkinson, Jane Axtell, Edward T Donnan, Peggy Gonder, Paula Hansley, Jeanne Howell, Elissa McAlear, Alan Heusdens and Kathie Moses, Richard and Cheri Phillips, John Rieder, Ronald Villiotti, Bobbi Vollmer, Karen von Saltza

Denver Field Ornithologists

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March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

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DMNS Liaison	Jeff Stephenson	jstephenson@dmns.org
Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome, new members: Edward T Donnan, Englewood; Chuck and Kathryn Dunleavy, Denver; Angela Grun, Englewood; John and Lucy James, Centennial; Neil Montague, Lakewood; Alan Heusdens and Kathie Moses, Sedalia; John Rieder, LaCrosse, WI; Pratyaydipta Rudra, Denver; Hedy Russo, Denver; Ronald Villiotti, Highlands Ranch; Amanda Ziegelbauer, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Garth Spellman,
DMNS Curator
of Ornithology
“New Approach
to Earbirding” Feb. 22, 2016

Chuck Hundertmark
and Bob Stocker
“Double-crested
Cormorant: Exemplar
of Human/Wildlife
Conflict” Mar. 28, 2016

Nathan Pieplow
TBD Apr. 25, 2016

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 25
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 40
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 21)	\$ 5
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

Research: Shortgrass Steppe

Recap: Polar Adventure

Etiquette Rule No. 2

Featured This Month

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/APRIL 2016/VOL 52 NO 4

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://dfobirds.org)

Field Trips

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt) Saturday, April 2 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go one mile west.

Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south).

Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

These ponds and riparian habitats can have a wide diversity of birds in the spring and often have some surprises.

Join this easy walk along accessible trails. Bring snacks and water. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cameron Pass for Boreal Owls Saturday, April 9 2:00 PM - 12:15 AM

Chris Rurik (Email: chrisrurik@gmail.com Phone: 253-225-7104)

Trail Difficulty: Strenuous

Maximum Participants: 15

Directions: Meet at 2 p.m. at SW corner of Moby Arena at CSU campus, Fort Collins to carpool.

From Denver take I-25 north to Prospect Road, exit 268. West on Prospect until Shields St, north on Shields to Elizabeth Street.

Turn right (east) into the giant parking lot for Moby Arena.

Details: Trip cosponsored by DFO and CSU Student Bird Club.

Continued on page 2

The Devil's Cormorant in Colorado

Loved by few and hated by many, the Double-crested Cormorant is taken for granted by most birders. Like many other organisms that have incurred the animosity of humans, cormorants are evolutionary success stories.

At the March 28 DFO meeting, Bob Stocker and Chuck Hundertmark will share their thoughts on "The Double-crested Cormorant: Exemplar of Human/Wildlife Conflict."

In an interactive presentation, Bob and Chuck will explore cormorant biology in the context of increasing conflicts between this highly successful ecological competitor and our own rapacious species.

The program will examine the status of this species in Colorado and will look in particular at the Denver City Park breeding colony. The program will be enriched with photos that may turn a few skeptics into cormorant lovers.

Former DFO President Hundertmark became hooked on cormorants in the 1970s in New Mexico when he was asked to monitor a multispecies heronry south of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico.

The colony comprised as many as 260 pairs of Double-crested Cormorants, several heron and egret species, and the state's first known breeding pairs of Neotropic Cormorants, known then as Olivaceous Cormorants.

In the early 1970s, when Stocker's birding consisted of watching feeder birds

Continued on page 5



Nesting Double-crested Cormorants. Bob Stocker

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Meet in Fort Collins and then carpool to start at Moose Visitor Center for mountain specialties including rosy-finches, Pine Grosbeak, Northern Goshawk, Cassin's Finch.

We will then return to Cameron Pass and hike out to the pre-scouted area where we will listen for Boreal Owls after dark.

This trip is rated **DIFFICULT** with up to 1000-ft elevation gain. We will be hiking at high elevations after dark.

Snowshoes required as are hats and gloves. Snacks and warm drinks in thermoses are highly recommended.

Also bring hand warmers and a headlight with extra batteries. We will eat dinner on the trail.

Register online or contact leader.

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County) Sunday, April 10 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir.

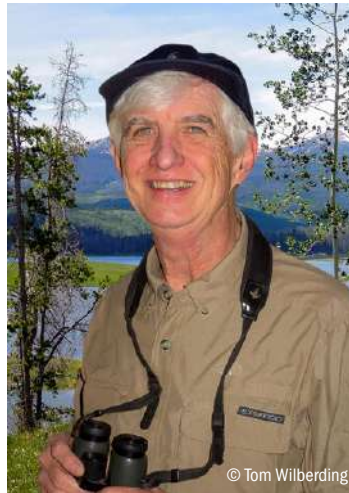
State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half-day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park, over a distance of about three miles.

Trails can be slippery so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Continued on next page

eBird Hotspots, cool spots, and notspots



From the President

Joe Roller

As eBird becomes more widely used (if you've been on a DFO field trip in the last few years, your sightings have been entered into it), it's helpful to know how this website is revolutionizing birding.

A basic feature is the eBird "Hotspot." There are over 1,400 of them in Colorado and hundreds of thousands around the world!

What is an eBird Hotspot? Hotspot is actually a misnomer. One is better described as "a public birding location created by eBird users, where birders aggregate their checklists to paint a robust picture of the avifauna there."

That's a mouthful!

"Hotspot" is shorthand for all that.

Want to read more? Try this link: <http://help.ebird.org/customer/en/portal/articles/1006824-what-is-an-ebird-hotspot->

Does a hotspot have to be "hot," that is, full of great birds? The answer is no, although many are quite birdy. A lot of hotspots are small parks or ponds repeatedly checked by birders. As far as rarities and variety go, they may be lukewarm or even cool.

But information about the ebb and flow of common birds slowly accumulates in "The Big eBird Computer" at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, providing scientists with valuable data.

Must a hotspot be a "spot"? No, some "spots" are a mile or two in length, segments of hiking trails, highways, or rivers. Some are entire state parks. Someday the website's hotspot teardrop markers may be replaced by circles or polygons.

Can your backyard be a hotspot? No, it must be public and enduring—you may move to Hawaii. I'd call your yard a "notspot." But it can be set up as a Personal Location, where you can keep your own checklists. Your data for species, numbers, arrival dates, breeding behaviors, etc. will still enter the universal eBird database.

Must there be safe, public parking? Yes. Roadside parking is OK if it is safe.

Can any eBirder suggest a new hotspot? Yes, just click the small box that appears on each eBird checklist. Each suggestion is reviewed to be sure it fits the definition and is not a duplicate. For example, don't suggest "Chatfield SP" as a new hotspot. There are a few there already.

It's best if you use eBird for a few months and get a feel for hotspots before suggesting your own. There are over 1,400 hotspots just in Colorado and hundreds of thousands around the world! Get out there and explore them!

Some hotspots have data from thousands of birding visits. For example the eBird hotspot for Cherry Creek SP has data for 322 bird species on 3,600 checklists!

Continued on page 3

DFO will elect officers, directors April 25

At its April 25th annual business meeting, DFO members will elect a full slate of Officers for the next year and three Directors for a three-year term.

As set out in the bylaws, the election will be by majority of the voting DFO Members present in person at the annual meeting. The voting will be by voice vote.

Directors Mary Driscoll and Mark Amershek, whose terms expire this year, have decided not to stand for re-election. Further, Mary Geder, after five years as Treasurer, has decided to step down from that office.

The Board thanks Mary Driscoll, Mark Amershek, and Mary Geder for their years of excellent service to the DFO.

The nominated Officers and Directors are:

Officers (one-year term)		Board of Directors (three-year term)
Joe Roller	President	Tom Behnfield
Bob Shade	Vice President	Susan Blansett
Sue Summers	Treasurer	Kay Niyo
Kris Haglund	Secretary	
Mary Cay Burger	Membership Chair	

PRESIDENT, continued from page 2

At the other extreme, a new hotspot named “Mitchell Gulch trail” has only one checklist and six species so far. Over time, birders’ data will accumulate.

Where are hotspots near me? First, go to the map showing all hotspots on earth. <http://ebird.org/ebird/hotspots>.

In the oval bubble in the upper right corner, type “Colorado.” The map is a blur, but as you zoom down to your favorite county, individual hotspots appear as distinct little teardrops. There are enough teardrops to soak all the hankies at a big wedding.

Click on a teardrop such as the bright red teardrop for Cherry Creek SP. A lot of information pops up—the number of bird species seen there over years, the number of checklists for the park, highest numbers of individuals, bar graphs, field notes from recent visits, and more.

You can click on any eBird Hotspot to see what has been recorded there recently or what was seen in a particular month in the past. Try it out!

Not on the eBird bandwagon yet? Here’s how to join and submit your first checklist:

http://help.ebird.org/customer/en/portal/articles/1972661-how-do-i-enter-sightings-in-ebird-?b_id=1928. You’ll be an “eBirder”!

While some eBird Hotspots are “hotter” than others, they are all incredibly “cool,” in that they allow us to share our bird observations at common locations.

The sightings from our birding hobby are now going into a powerful and permanent research database used by ornithologists all over the world. That’s hot!

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Rueter-Hess Reservoir (Douglas Co.)

Sunday, April 17

7:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Mary Cay Burger (Email: mcburger3@juno.com Phone: 720-940-8394)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 16

Directions: Meet at Barr CCC Park, 10951 S Twenty Mile Rd, Parker, CO 80134, located on the SW corner of Main St and 20 Mile Rd for birding there and later at the Rueter-Hess Reservoir, which is open to the public only with entry permission.

Tim Ryan, Parker Water Dept, will colead.

We will first bird at the Barr CCC Park in Parker, which is next to Cherry Creek, to check for riparian birds.

The next stop will be Rueter-Hess Reservoir, Parker Water Department’s new reservoir not yet open to the public. There we could see grassland species and waterfowl.

Bring binoculars, snacks, water, and sunscreen. Bring a scope if you have one for the reservoir.

Register online or contact leader.

Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield

Saturday, April 23

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Lynn Willcockson (Email: Lynnliz2698@aol.com Phone: 303-757-7000)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 15

Directions: On Deer Creek Rd west of S Wadsworth Blvd, south of C-470.

The Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield is what used to be

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

called the Arboretum. Admission is free if you are a member. Otherwise it is \$5 per car. (Good incentive to carpool!)

Enjoy a leisurely walk through varied habitats. Lunch optional.

Register online or contact leader.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR Sunday, April 24 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Candice Johnson (Email: candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org
Phone: 303-329-8131)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 15

Directions: Meet at the Arsenal Visitors Center, 6550 Gateway Rd, Commerce City, CO.

General directions: On I-70 east, take exit 278, turn left onto Quebec St, turn right onto E 60th Ave, turn left onto Trenton St, continue onto Gateway Rd to Visitor Center.

In this prairie and lake environment we hope to see migrants and many waterfowl and raptors.

Be prepared to carpool because parking is limited at the lakes.

Bison and deer are likely to be seen. We will take short walks on level trails only. Good for beginning birders.

Bathrooms at Visitor's Center open at 9 a.m. There are picnic tables for anyone wishing to have lunch afterward.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: *Bird Musicality*

Tim Johnson

On February 22, a sizable crowd gathered to hear a presentation by Dr. Garth Spellman, Denver Museum of Nature and Science's newly-appointed Curator of Ornithology.

Dr. Spellman, formerly Associate Professor of Evolutionary Biology at Black Hills State University in South Dakota, has research interests in genetic effects of recent and ancient environmental changes on bird species, and mechanisms of speciation in general.

He chose to speak about "Bird Musicality: Intersections with Human Musical Preferences," a topic one might not think was related to speciation.

He began by playing sound recordings of five birds, at one-fourth the frequency at which the birds vocalize, to illustrate the rapidity and complexity of avian voices.

The most spectacular recording for me was the Pacific Wren, little more than high buzzes at normal speed, which unraveled to a convoluted and melodious song at one-fourth speed.

The point was that songbirds can compress information into such short intervals that humans cannot recognize it as such without specialized equipment. As Dr. Spellman went on to discuss, birds do this with a vocal apparatus called the syrinx, which allows a bird to independently control two different sounds at once.

Zebra Finches are the recognized experimental model for studying vocalization in birds. Recent studies have found that these birds and humans share expression of 55 genes between brain regions important for vocal learning, many of which are involved in forming connections between neurons.

In addition, brain areas responsible for muscular control in the larynx (humans) and syrinx (birds) share about 200 active genes.

Bird ability to learn vocalizations varies widely, ranging from roughly none in song nonlearners (e.g., white-cheeked geese) to perhaps an apex in the Magnificent Lyrebird, which can imitate sounds never heard in nature—chainsaws, sirens, and the like.

Dr. Spellman played an uncanny recording of this bird; please listen to it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjE0Kdfos4Y>.

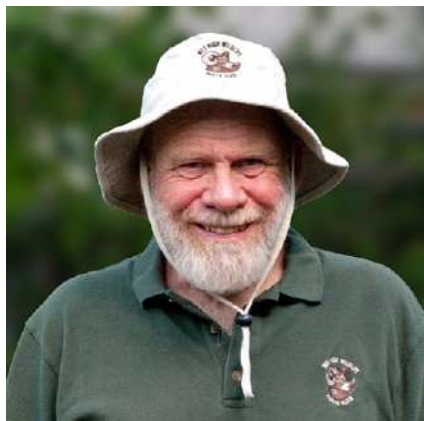
Even birds that are not known for vocalization proficiency, like the Rock Pigeon, can be taught to discriminate between similar sounds; in Dr. Spellman's example, musical passages of Bach and Mozart.

What sounds do birds prefer? Research suggests that songbirds prefer consonance over dissidence (think Mozart over Webern; studies assess birds' preferential movement towards different musical backgrounds).

They also like sounds along the overtone series (1/2, 1/4, etc. of the base frequency above the base tone—if you have an instrument, playing C, G, C, E, G, A, A# approximates this).

Dr. Spellman played a beautiful example, a recording of the Musician Wren (I think it was www.xeno-canto.org/253170, anyway, that is just as good) whose use of major 4ths, 5ths, and octaves in pure notes occupies almost 50% of the song.

Continued on page 6



Bob Stocker. *Bob Stocker*

meeting of the Colorado Urban Wildlife Photo Club.

Bailey and Niedrach reported the species as uncommon in Colorado before 1930. By the publication of their *Birds of Colorado* in 1965, however, these cormorants were "...numerous on the large reservoirs of the eastern counties."

The soon-to-be-released second Colorado breeding bird atlas will report increased observations of possible, probable, and confirmed nesting sites in the state. This is consistent with increasing population trends nationwide.

As populations have grown, so have conflicts with sport fishermen and fish farmers. These conflicts have resulted in federal depredation orders that allow cormorants to be managed through killing of birds and destruction of nests or eggs in large areas of the country.

In Canada, where conservationists have been more actively involved in cormorant discussions, management policies have been more restrained than in the United States.

Bob and Chuck will discuss these policies in the context of cormorant life histories and biology. They will also examine the cultural associations that have made it easier for us to demonize a species whose success is partly a re-

in his backyard, a fellow graduate student enthused about seeing cormorants, egrets, and herons on a DFO trip.

Bob had no idea that such striking birds could be found in Colorado. Since then, he has always thought of cormorants as being special.

Today he rarely passes up an opportunity to photograph them. Bob's contributions to this program evolved from short presentations prior to an Audubon Society of Greater Denver night hike and at a



Chuck Hundertmark. *William Bond*

flection of devoted parenting.

The DFO meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Ricketson Auditorium.

Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting.

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Barr Lake State Park

Saturday, April 30

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Gregg Goodrich (Email: GreggGoodrich@gmail.com
Phone: 303-655-9135)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass or day pass required.

From Denver, take east I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Rd, then turn south for ~2 miles to park entrance and follow road to Visitor Center.

Bring snacks, lunch, and plenty of water. Trip may be 3/4 day depending on birds and weather.

Trip can be easily modified to be accessible for a person with a disability. Beginners are welcome.

Barr Lake can have interesting migrants at this time. **Register online or contact leader.**

Roxborough State Park

Saturday, April 30

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Alison Kondler (Email: Fieldbirder@msn.com
Phone: 303-904-9140)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Take S Wadsworth Blvd past Chatfield SP to Waterton Rd on left. Take Waterton Rd 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Road.

Turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left (east) onto Roxborough Park Rd and then turn immediately right (south) on Roxborough Rd and follow signs to the Park (2.2 miles).

State Parks pass or day pass required.

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

Join Alison Kondler for this unique mnemonic birding-by-ear program.

Whether you are new to bird-song identification, or an expert who needs a little fine-tuning, you'll be sure to gain valuable knowledge from this course.

We will start with an indoor presentation and then take our new-found skills outside on a 2.5 mile guided bird walk in this scenic park.

Please arrive on time as a courtesy to the other participants. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks.

For more information on this program, go to BirdingByEar.com.

We will start at the Visitor Center for a fun presentation to teach you a variety of useful techniques to memorize bird sounds.

Then we will head outside on an easy, slow-paced hike of approximately 1.5 miles to practice identifying the local birds.

Register online or contact leader.

—Scheduled by Jill Boice

DFO Members: Save the date, please—June 11

The Denver Fun Ornithologists invites you to a summer picnic!

Castlewood Canyon State Park

We'll have field trips, fellowship, food, and fun!

Details to follow, but for now, simply SAVE THE DATE!

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 4

This bird apparently inspired a symphony by Heitor Villa-Lobos, which I must look up! The Hermit Thrush also plays with overtones.

Why do birds do this? Dr. Spellman discussed several possibilities, not mutually exclusive.

Pure natural selection—for example, loud, pure tones having more range and reaching more listeners in some environments—could play a role. He thinks that sexual selection—aka Darwinian aesthetics, the “biology of beauty”—plays a more significant part.

In some species, like birds of paradise, intricacies of dance performance or plumage perfection seem to determine mating preferences. Closer to home, there is evidence that male Black-capped Chickadees must sing the “fee-bee” call to within a few hertz between notes to be noticed by females. Sounds like Jane Austen!

Other birds, e.g., Veery and White-throated Sparrow, also show attention to pitch accuracy. Other species (e.g., Happy Wren) require potential mates to sing perfect duets.

Dr. Spellman wrapped up the presentation by discussing vocalization and speciation. Among several examples, I thought the most dramatic was the House Wren, the most widely distributed wren in the Americas.

They all look the same from Tierra del Fuego to New England, but genetic data indicate that they divide into at least three distinct populations.

Dr. Spellman played recordings of House Wrens from locations throughout North and South America, which clearly demonstrated regional differentiation. Whether these regional song variants correspond to DNA sequence variants is under current study.

Conclusion: Keep your ears open! You might find a new species!

Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Kathy Bollhoefer, Karel Buckley, Laurie Chotena, Jim Esten, Audrey Gilden, Diane Hutton, Nancy Osborn, Bruce Peterson

Denver Field Ornithologists

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Kristine Haglund	303-906-8044	kahaglund1@aol.com
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FIELD TRIP SCHEDULERS

January	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

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COBirds	Internet bird-sighting discussion list	cobirds@googlegroups.com
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Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome, new members: Sally Polk and Catherine Carr, Denver; Colin Deihl and Dina Clark, Denver; Keith Hidalgo, Lakewood; Art Hudak, Denver; Peter Nelson, Littleton; Alan Peryam, Denver; Bruce Peterson, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

**Chuck Hundertmark
and Bob Stocker**

“Double-crested
Cormorant: Exemplar
of Human/Wildlife
Conflict” Mar. 28, 2016

Nathan Pieplow

“Hearing
Evolution” Apr. 25, 2016

Eric Eaton

“Beyond Birding:
Getting to Know
Insects” Sept. 26, 2016

Kevin Cook

“200 Miles of Birding
in 200 Years” Oct. 24, 2016

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 25
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 40
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26)	\$ 10
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting
Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742
Featured This Month
eBird Hotspots
DFO Board Election
Save the Date for Picnic



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/MAY 2016/VOL 52 NO 5

HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG

Field Trips

Jackson Lake Reservoir Sunday, May 1

6:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Tammy Sanders & Ira Sanders
(Email: amkestral@gmail.com
Phone: 303-278-7172)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right to carpool. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is an all-day trip so bring lunch, plenty of water, bug spray, and sunscreen.

Scopes will be helpful and remember your mud boots as we may hike through some mud.

Radios are a necessity to keep the cars in communication. Be prepared to either drive or ride since the limit for cars is 4. We will leave at 6:15 sharp! **Register online or contact leader.**

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt) Saturday, May 7

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Continued on page 2

**Please attend:
DFO members
will elect officers
and directors
at the April 25
business meeting.**

Birdsong can reveal evolutionary history

Many of us have spent time learning how to identify birds to species by listening to them. But did you realize that listening to birds can also reveal their evolutionary history? At the April 25 DFO meeting, Nathan Pieplow will help us understand this concept.



Nathan Pieplow. Molly Steele

similar than you think; why the name of the Upland Sandpiper (once called Upland Plover) is still wrong; and what the heck a Yellow-breasted Chat really is.

Nathan Pieplow is the author of the forthcoming *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds*, and the founder of the website www.Earbirding.com. He is one of the authors of the Colorado Birding Trail, and a former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*. He teaches writing and rhetoric at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

NOTE Venue Change: This DFO meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science Morgridge Family Entertainment Center. Enter through the North security door, as usual, and guided by the DFO Welcoming Team, walk straight south through the first floor of the Museum to the Morgridge Center.

Map link: <http://www.dmns.org/plan-your-visit/floor-maps/level-1/>

Over the past two decades, DNA studies have radically restructured the bird family tree.

Suddenly, ducks and chickens are together at the front of the field guide; falcons have landed next to parrots; our tanagers are grosbeaks; our seedeater is a tanager!

But some of these taxonomic “surprises” would never have been so surprising in the first place, if we had just been listening.

In this talk, Nathan will show how the vocal repertoires of birds can reveal deep evolutionary relationships.

Among other topics, he'll explain why warblers and sparrows are much more

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go one mile west.

Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south).

Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

This is a trip with easy walking and accessible for mobility impaired individuals. Bring water and a snack; lunch optional.

Good trip for novice birders and new members. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County) Sunday, May 8

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Bill Wuerthele (Email: wuerthel@ecentral.com
Phone: 303-333-2519)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles.

Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Prewitt SWA (Washington County) Thursday, May 12

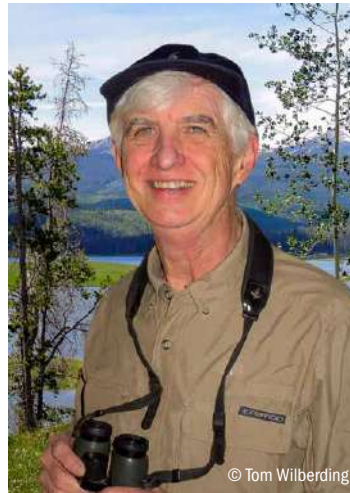
6:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Mark Amershek (Email: mammershek@msn.com
Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Continued on next page

Better Birding guides trip participants



From the President

Joe Roller

DFO is outstanding among the nation's birding clubs for the number and quality of field trips it offers.

In the last few years we've worked hard to give our leaders the training and resources they need to excel.

Not resting on its laurels, the Field Trip Committee has come up with *Better Birding with DFO*, to guide the other side of the equation—the participants!

It has everything you need to know to make DFO field trips great. *Better Birding* was written by a talented and experienced trio, Karen von Saltza, Chuck Hundertmark, and Chris Rurik, using ideas from dozens of trained DFO field trip leaders.

After working for months to polish it up, it's now available on the DFO website for everyone to read. Just visit the website at <http://dfobirds.org>. Then click on "Field Trips" and "Register for a Field Trip." *Better Birding* pops up, and can be read in twenty minutes.

In it are suggestions, good ideas, and the tricks of the trade; everything from choosing the trip that's right for you to how birding with a group works best for everyone.

It's an easy read and it's entertaining while being direct with the information you want to know. One thing I like about it is the positive tone. It's not at all "preachy," but encourages birders to get the most out of every field trip by birding cooperatively with the trip leader and the other participants.

Better Birding advises us to "Be Prepared." That seems obvious, but seasoned trip leaders know from experience that the more prepared everyone is, the more birds we see and can enjoy as a group. It also translates into having more fun.

Preparation comes in many forms, and this guide covers them all. Not just gearing up, but learning about habitats we'll visit and preparing a list of target birds.

You may have heard about "The Ten Essentials," water, clothing, food, sunscreen, etc., but with DFO there is an eleventh essential—a good attitude!

I like this explanation from *Better Birding*, "When you sign up for a field trip, you are committing to being part of a group, which means trading some of your birding autonomy for the joy and benefits of birding with others."

Birding with a group means staying with the group and following the leader's advice. It might mean that photographers may not be able to linger and capture every pose of every bird.

You may want to adjust your birding style to fit into the group experience. Bouncy birders who get a kick out of quickly finding and identifying every bird in view before marching on (who, me?) will want to slow down a bit, savor what you see, and be a mentor for beginners.

Continued on page 3

A continent sings: birdsong by bicycle

Birdsong expert Donald Kroodsma shares stories from his incredible 10-week, 10-state bicycle journey with his son, from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Kroodsma's book *Listening to a Continent Sing* is a celebration of singing birds and the voices of people along the way. From birds to flowers and trees, rocks and rivers, mountains and prairies, clouds and sky, weather and winds, Kroodsma brings the land to life as he shares this amazing journey with his son.

Join us as we take the slow road with him from Virginia to Oregon. Denver Museum of Nature and Science presents in partnership with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies.

DMNS Ricketson Auditorium

Thursday, May 26, 7 p.m.

Tickets:

\$8 Museum or Bird Conservancy of the Rockies member, \$10 nonmember
Reservations are encouraged for all After Hours events. Please visit our [online ticketing store](http://www.dmns.org/learn/adults/after-hours/). You may call at 303.370.6000, Daily, 9-5. <http://www.dmns.org/learn/adults/after-hours/>

PRESIDENT, continued from page 2

On the other hand birders who like to sit down for an hour to watch a bird build a nest will realize that the leader and the group may want to leave that intriguing scene in search of other birds and other behaviors.

Many of you have been on a ton of DFO trips and may have been a trip leader yourself. So it's easy to say, "I know all that stuff already!" But are you up to speed on DFO's policy on tape playback? Or taking time for photography? Or when it's best to quickly call out the name of every bird versus giving others time to puzzle out the ID?

There are sections on the different types of field trips and what to expect. Birding cooperatively, sharing, and communicating with the leader are stressed. Tips on field craft include how to orally describe to others where a bird is located.

There are tips on being stealthy, on respecting the birds and their habitat. DFO leader training emphasizes how to handle emergencies; *Better Birding* extends that advice to the group. And the *Better Birding* list of traffic safety tips was developed by an expert in the field.

Better Birding has a section called "after the trip" about sharing driving expenses, photos, and bird lists. And at the very end there's a warm welcome to sign up for your next trip, bring a buddy, and join DFO.

In addition to the more detailed version, the authors of *Better Birding with DFO* condensed the document into a one-page summary. This quick reference of best birding practices will make each adventure into the natural world a good one.

So please read *Better Birding with DFO* and sign up for a DFO field trip or three!

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at the RTD Park-n-Ride on the southwest corner of US 287 and Niwot Road to carpool.

This is approximately 1 mile north of the intersection of US 287 and 52.

You will need an annual SWA pass or fishing license that are available on line at CPW or at some sporting goods stores. You will NOT need a State Parks pass.

Guest leader will be Chris Owens. This will be a full-day trip so be sure to bring lunch, snacks, and water.

Be sure to also bring scopes, binoculars, and field guides. Waterproof footwear may also be useful.

We will look for waterfowl, migrants, and any residents preparing for breeding season. This gem of an SWA has been known to attract some wonderful migrants.

Register online or contact leader.

Spring Bird Counts

May 12-15

Refer to the schedule on page 8 in this newsletter.

Denver Botanic Gardens and Cheesman Park

Sunday, May 15

7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Chris Rurik (Email: chrisrurik@gmail.com Phone: 253-225-7104)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet on the top floor of the Denver Botanic Garden's parking garage. It is a left-hand turn from Josephine Street (one way) between 9th and 11th in Denver.

The guest leader will be Jared Del Rosso. In the past two years Denver Botanic Gardens has

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

emerged as Denver County's premier rarity magnet, thanks to Jared Del Rosso.

Join Jared and Chris Rurik for a morning exploration of the gardens and adjacent Cheesman Park, sometimes called Denver National Forest, at the peak of spring migration.

Last year's eye-popping at-the-Gardens birds included Common Poorwill, Brown Thrasher, Philadelphia Vireo, and Broad-winged Hawk.

Discounted admission is \$10.50 for a group of 10 or more. Members: Bring your membership card for free admission.

NOTE: Colfax Marathon is the same day—check street closures and plan your arrival route accordingly. **Register online or contact leader.**

Pawnee National Grasslands (Weld County)

Friday, May 20

6:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Chuck Hundertmark (Email: chundertmark8@gmail.com
Phone: 303-604-0531)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 Broadway to carpool. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

We should see a nice variety of grassland birds and migrants. Bring binoculars, lunch, snacks, and water. **Register online or contact leader.**

Wetlands at Chatfield

Saturday, May 21

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: *Cormorants*

Tim Johnson

On March 28, about 70 contrarian souls turned out to hear Chuck Hundertmark and Bob Stocker, spokespersons for a tiny and much-maligned community that celebrates the virtues of the Double-crested Cormorant (DCCO).

Chuck, of course, is past president of the DFO and his credentials are well known. Bob Stocker has a Ph.D. in physics, but morphed into a photographer and has a website and blog where many photos used in the presentation may be viewed (<http://www.stockerphotos.com/blog/>).

Their presentation, "Double-Crested Cormorants: Exemplar of Human/Wildlife Conflict," covered biology and phenology as well.

Bob began with an overview and natural history. Worldwide, there are about 40 species of cormorant or shag, of which six species are represented in the United States. The DCCO is common in Colorado and Neotropic Cormorant, at least so far, is a Colorado visitor. These two species are the only U.S. cormorants commonly found on fresh water.

Averaging about five pounds with a 4-foot wingspan, the DCCO has several key adaptations. Prehensile feet enable it to perch on branches. Its heavy bone structure, wettable feathers, and the ability to restrict blood flow when diving contribute to the success of its underwater feeding habits, along with webbed feet set far back on its body.

A colonial nester raising one or two broods per year, both males and females share parenting responsibilities. It reaches maturity in three years and can live up to 22 years. Following the ban on DDT use in 1972, its numbers have soared.

Chuck Hundertmark took over here to describe feeding habits and interactions with humans, good and bad. DCCOs like small fish, less than 6 inches, and tend to fish at shallow depths. Preferred prey are gizzard shad, alewives in the Great Lakes region, and—here lie the conflicts—sport fish like small-mouth bass, and farmed fish like channel catfish.

Southern fish farmers don't like large, black predators migrating in from out of state in winter to plunder their livelihood, and sport anglers don't like them in summer feeding on "their" fishing grounds, whatever the evidence might show concerning effects on fish populations.

Such animosity is not helped by the facts that the bird looks a little like a large flying snake, has a color long associated with evil and death, and whose population is expanding thanks largely to the ban on DDT and the expansion of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in 1972 to protect cormorants among others.

Resentment of the DCCO boiled over at the hamlet of Henderson Harbor, NY on July 27, 1998. The town is a center for bass fishing on Lake Ontario, and had been quarrelling with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) over cormorant management on Little Galoo Island, which at that time had a colony of some 8,500 nesting DCCO pairs.

Anglers had long maintained that the birds were destroying their livelihood (a complicated issue; the age of fish at consumption is critical). On that day, anglers apparently killed close to 1,000 birds (more details can be found

Continued on page 5



Double-crested Cormorant in the Denver City Park colony on Duck Lake. *Chuck Hundertmark*

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 4

at www.nytimes.com/1998/08/01/nyregion/a-slaughter-of-cormorants-in-angler-country.html?pagewanted=all).

This incident and others triggered actions by USFWS culminating in a Public Service Depredation Order in 2003. This order allowed lethal control of DCCO without federal permit if, in the case of commercial aquaculture producers, the said DCCOs are “committing or about to commit depredation of aquaculture stocks.” Similar rules apply to some public lands. This regulation is still in effect.

Concern over predation by DCCO has spread to the West Coast. East Sand Island, at the mouth of the Columbia River, hosts a colony of about 15,000 DCCO, which USFWS proposes to cull on the grounds that the birds are devouring too many salmon and steelhead smolt. This action is strongly contested by local groups (an excellent article by Ted Williams can be found at www.flyrodreel.com/feast-of-the-cormorants).

In Colorado, so far there is no effort to “manage” cormorants, although their numbers have more than doubled in the last fifteen years.

Chuck made the interesting suggestion that DFO could monitor the colony in City Park to answer some outstanding questions. How long does it take for guano to kill cottonwoods? How far do DCCO fly to fishing spots? How are nesting dates changing with time (it has been earlier lately—this year, possibly February 15)?

Filled with enthusiasm, I trekked down to City Park to take a look. Colony size estimated at 300 birds. Little long-range flying at 2 p.m. I'll be paying more attention to these birds and reading about them (e.g., books by King, R.J., 2013, *The Devil's Cormorant: A Natural History*; Wires, L.R., 2014, *The Double-Crested Cormorant: Plight of a Feathered Pariah*; Wild, D., 2012, *The Double-Crested Cormorant: Symbol of Ecological Conflict*).

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Denver Audubon Nature Center parking lot.

From C-470 drive south on Wadsworth 4.4 miles. Turn left at Waterton Canyon Road and an almost immediate left into the Nature Center parking lot.

We will make a 3.5 mile loop through mixed grasslands, stands of cottonwood, and along the South Platte River to the Banding Station at Chatfield.

Expect a large variety of birds as this is a main flyway for mountain birds on their return from more southern climes.

We might find a Western Tanager or a MacGillivray's Warbler. A Black-chinned Hummingbird may be starting a nest. The song of the Yellow-breasted Chat will accompany us throughout the walk.

We will end our trip at the Banding Station run by Meredith McBurney. Dress in layers and prepare for warm weather. Bring plenty of water.

Register online or contact leader.

Westerly Wetlands

Sunday, May 22

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Chris Rurik (Email: chrisrurik@gmail.com Phone: 253-225-7104)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet on Sports Blvd in Denver's Lowry neighborhood.

From Quebec St head east on E Lowry Blvd. Go right at the roundabout (S Fairmount Dr).

Take the first left onto Sports Blvd. Go straight past all the ball fields, then park just after

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Field Trips

Continued from page 5

crossing a bridge over the outlet creek.

Wetlands then warblers... Grebes then ghosts... On this leisurely migration morning we will hit two Denver County hotspots that are a short distance apart but very different habitats.

At Westerly Wetlands we will see diverse waterfowl and possibly Yellow-headed Blackbirds, rails, and White-faced Ibis.

Then in the hallowed grounds of Fairmount Cemetery we will search for skulkers and evergreen-lovers with possible *Catharus* thrushes, catbird, flycatchers, and warblers.

Bring water and binoculars. Scopes are useful at Westerly.

Register online or contact leader.

Sedalia to Cheesman for Woodpeckers

Thursday, May 26

6:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Chris Blakeslee & Paul Sling-sby (Email: ChrisABla@aol.com Phone: 303-694-4670)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: Meet the leaders at the U.S. Post Office in Sedalia.

Take Hwy 85 to Sedalia in Douglas County; turn southwest on Hwy 67; drive through Sedalia over 2 major sets of railroad tracks.

The U.S. Post Office is on the northwest (right) side of Hwy 67.

We will target 8 woodpecker species including American Three-toed, Lewis's, and Red-headed Woodpeckers, and other nesting mountain species.

Group will be off-trail walking in moderate terrain for a total of 1 to 2 miles with minimal altitude gain.

Bring lunch, water, and cloth-

Continued on next page

DFO announces seven grants for 2016

by Candice Johnson

The Grants Committee is pleased to announce that we have awarded seven grants in 2016 thanks to the generosity of those of you who contributed to the Grants fund in 2015. Six of these grants were awarded for research on threatened bird species of the Front Range, and the seventh was a grant for scholarships to birding camps. Here are our grantees:

- Mountain Plovers of South Park, Colorado: migratory trade-offs of high elevation living. Allison Pierce is a graduate student at CU Denver, and this is our first grant to her.
- Importance of habitat heterogeneity to the distribution and breeding success of shortgrass steppe birds (Lark Bunting, Horned Lark, McCown's Longspur). Amber Carver is now a doctoral student at CU Denver, and we have funded her for the past two years on her Master's degree. She has led a field trip to her site, and she has recently written an article for *The Lark Bunting* (http://dfobirds.org/LarkBunting/Archives/2010-2019/2016/03_Mar_2016_LB.pdf).
- Cinnamon Teal Population and Breeding Ecology: Factors influencing vital rates. Casey Setash is a graduate student at Colorado State University, and this is our first grant to her.
- Raptor Ecology and Adaptive Grazing at the Central Plains Experimental Range. James and Angela Dwyer are researchers affiliated with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies. This is our first grant to them.
- Flammulated Owl Fall Migration. Max Ciaglo and Ross Calhoun are in their third year of research in Manitou Experimental Forest, and we have supported them all three years. They recently had an article about their work in *The Lark Bunting* (http://dfobirds.org/LarkBunting/Archives/2010-2019/2016/02_Feb_2016_LB.pdf). The work is assisted by Colorado College.
- Clark's Nutcracker Seed Use and Spatial Dynamics in Rocky Mountain National Park. Tyler Williams is a graduate student at CU Denver, and this is our second year of support for his work.
- Supporting Summer Campers in ornithology-focused overnight camps: "Taking Flight" and "On the Wing." Tyler Williamson is on the staff of the

Continued on page 7



Male McCown's Longspur, Central Plains Experimental Range, Weld Co., CO. 2014. Amber Carver



Send us your best bird photo of 2015!

We want to showcase your amazing photographs! At the April 25 member meeting we will show a slideshow with members' best photos of 2015. After the meeting all of the photos will be posted to the DFO Facebook page for everyone to enjoy.

To have your photo included, email it to chrisrurik@gmail.com or mail it to Chris Rurik, 1200 Vine St. Apt. 7A, Denver CO 80206.

Does it have to be a bird from Colorado? No. Does it have to be a bird? No, anything birding-related, really. Does it have to be magazine-quality? Of course not! One photo per member, please.

Photos must be received by Saturday, April 23, to be included.

GRANTS, continued from page 6

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (formerly the RMBO). These scholarship funds will support students at both the junior and senior high levels this summer at camps held at Highlands Presbyterian Camp in Allenspark, CO.

Members of the Research, Education, and Conservation Committee who reviewed grants were Carol Cochran, Tina Jones, and Candice Johnson. All recipients have expressed deep appreciation to the DFO members who donated funds for their research or educational outreach. Our total awards for 2016 were \$6,000, and the breakdown of funds by grant is on our website (<http://dfobirds.org/Grants/>).

**Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund:
Margaret Arp, Lee and Linda Farrell**

Field Trips

Continued from page 6

ing for changeable mountain weather.

We will be carpooling so be prepared to either ride or drive depending on leaders' preference. We will be back in Sedalia by 4 p.m. **Register online or contact leader.**

Central Plains Experimental Range (CPER) near Pawnee Grasslands

**Saturday, May 28
8:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

Amber Carver (Email: caramb22@gmail.com
Phone: 310-483-5721)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the CPER field houses.

To get there from Denver, take I-25 north to Wellington (exit 278). After exiting, turn right and then take an immediate left onto the frontage road.

After half a mile, turn right on CR 64 (labeled as "Nunn Road"). After 11.1 miles, you will have reached the town of Nunn.

Turn left on U.S. 85. After 7.2 miles, turn right on CR 114. Take the first right (after 0.7 miles) down a dirt driveway toward a cluster of buildings.

The hike will be easy but uneven, 1-2 miles total, with some driving from place to place. Bring sturdy walking shoes to protect ankles (due to cactus).

Spotting scopes optional (in case of raptors).

Expected species include McCown's Longspur, Lark Bunting, and Horned Lark.

Species that are possible include Burrowing Owl, Mountain Plover, Ferruginous Hawk, and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on page 8

Field Trips

Continued from page 7

Chico Basin Ranch

Sunday, May 29

6:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Mark Amershek (Email:

mamershek@msn.com

Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: To carpool, meet at the King Soopers parking lot at 100 Founders Parkway (just east of I-25) in Castle Rock, CO.

One-day birding pass for Chico Basin Ranch is \$15 or \$10/individual when with a DFO group. This is a fee area.

We need volunteers with high clearance vehicles to drive on ranch roads. Let leader know if you can drive.

Chico Basin Ranch is a working cattle ranch located in El Paso/Pueblo counties, south-east of Colorado Springs.

The driving distance from Castle Rock will be approximately 100 miles, a little over two hours.

The ranch will be birded by following the ranch roads in vehicles with stops to bird on level open areas such as ponds, wetlands, and grasslands. This will be an all-day trip so please bring water and lunch.

Scopes will be handy but not necessary. A two-way radio per car would be helpful.

We will bird until 4 p.m. and should be back at Castle Rock around 6 p.m.

Register online or contact leader.

Parker Regional Park

Sunday, May 29

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Patti Galli (Email:

cookiegirl56@Live.com

Phone: 303-995-4192)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Continued on next page

34th Annual Spring Bird Count

Everyone is welcome—just show up! More eyes spot more birds.

Thursday, May 12

Barr Lake periphery, 7:30 a.m.

Leader: Dick Anderson (303-757-4582)

Meeting Place: On access road to entrance station at Barr Lake State Park

This trip does not involve much walking. Good for people with limited mobility or stamina.

Friday, May 13

Cherry Creek Reservoir, 6:30 a.m.

Leader: Bob Brown (303-478-5243)

Meeting Place: At the marina on west side (near Cherry Creek High School) in Cherry Creek State Park. State Parks pass required.

Saturday, May 14

Waterton downstream, 6 a.m.

Leader: Urling Kingery (303-814-2723)

Meeting Place: At Audubon Center/Discovery Pavilion (left turn immediately after turning from Wadsworth [CO 121] onto Waterton\Roxborough Rd [4.4 miles south of C-470] and before the DOW parking lot for Waterton Canyon)

Wear long pants due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed. A 4–5 mile hike.

Lower Bear Creek, 6:30 a.m.

Leader: Rick Creswell (720-963-9163, rickcreswell@yahoo.com)

Meeting Place: At 6 a.m. at new parking lot by Conoco station, C-470 and Morrison Road.

Count begins at Bear Creek Lake Park at 6:30 a.m. If you would like to go to Marston Lake later in the day, contact leader at least five days before count because of admission requirements set by Denver Water.

Barr Lake State Park, 6 a.m.

Leader: Amy Morton (571-480-3113, amylmorton@yahoo.com)

Meeting Place: Bird Conservancy of the Rockies. Exit I-76 at Bromley Lane; go east about ¼ mile and turn right (south) on Lark Bunting Lane to end of road. State Parks pass required.

Sunday, May 15

Castlewood Canyon State Park, 6:30 a.m.

Leader: Tom Halverstadt (303-618-6730, thavs1@comcast.net)

Meeting Place: At old entrance. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance. State Parks pass required.

Continued on page 9



Short-billed Dowitcher. *Chris Rurik*



Tennessee Warbler. *Chuck Hundertmark*

SPRING BIRD COUNT, continued from page 8

Chatfield State Park, 6 a.m.

Leader: Joey Kellner (303-978-1748)

Meeting Place: West (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks pass required.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Leader: Urling Kingery (303-814-2723)

Space limited; **contact leader to register.**

Field Trips

Continued from page 8

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: From Main St intersection in Parker, go south on Parker Rd (CO 83) for 1.2 miles.

Turn right on Indianpipe Ln and right into McCabe Meadows parking lot in Salisbury Park (Parker Regional Park).

We bird along the Cherry Creek Trail.

Please bring scopes, snacks, and water. We will look for migrants, waterfowl, and any resident birds.

Register online or contact leader.

Meyers Gulch past Walker Ranch, Boulder

Monday, May 30

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Paula Hansley (Email:

plhansley@gmail.com

Phone: 720-890-2628)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the East Boulder Recreation Center at South Boulder Road and 55th Street.

Park at the west end of the main parking lot to assemble a car pool. Meyers Gulch is part of Boulder County's Open Space system.

We will take a lovely trail (at about 7,300 to 8,000 ft elevation) through ponderosa pine, aspen, meadow, and small willow carr.

Several types of flycatcher, woodpecker, sparrow, warbler, and other species will be seen in their breeding habitats.

Bring lunch or goodsized snack and water.

Register online or contact leader.

— **Scheduled by Chris Owens**

DFO 2015 Year End Report to Members

	Operating Funds	Grant Funds	Total
Balance 12-31-2014	\$12,937.35	\$6,634.76	\$19,572.11
plus Deposits			
Membership Dues	\$14,330.07		
Art Auction Proceeds		\$650.00	
Donations		\$4,261.00	
Balance Before 2015 Expenses / Disbursements	\$27,267.42	\$11,545.76	\$38,813.18
less Expenses / Disbursements			
<i>Lark Bunting</i>			
Printing	\$2,128.15		
Layout	\$2,405.00		
Honoraria	\$1,225.00		
Website Upgrades, Maintenance	\$800.00		
Website Domain Name, Web Host, Mailing List	\$196.33		
Insurance			
Gen Liability	\$822.00		
D & O	\$744.00		
Field Trip Leader Training	\$42.44		
DMNS Assoc Member Dues	\$650.00		
PayPal Fees	\$290.61		
New Logo Design, Lettering, Framing	\$468.60		
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$132.77		
Grants Distributed			
Flamm Owl Fall migration study to Max Ciaglo		\$1,523.00	
Grassland Passerine Nest Survival to Amber Carver		\$1,800.00	
Clark's Nutcracker Spatial Dynamics to Tyler Williams		\$1,900.00	
RMBO to Tyler Edmondson for Camp Scholarships, 2 way radios		\$1,400.00	
Total Operating Expenses	\$9,904.90		\$9,904.90
Total Grant Funds Distributed		\$6,623.00	\$6,623.00
Balance 12-31-2015	\$17,362.52	\$4,922.76	\$22,285.28

Denver Field Ornithologists

OFFICERS

President	Joe Roller	jroller9@gmail.com
Vice President	Bob Shade	wrshade3@gmail.com
Treasurer	Mary Geder	mfg5000@live.com
Secretary	Kristine Haglund	kahaglund1@aol.com
Membership Chair	Mary Cay Burger	mcburger3@juno.com
Past President	Chuck Hundertmark	chundertmark8@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark Amershek (2016)	mamershek@msn.com
Susan Blansett (2016)	susanblansett@gmail.com
Will Burt (2018)	willburt43@gmail.com
Mary Driscoll (2016)	wddriscoll@gmail.com
Candice Johnson (2018)	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org
Tina Jones (2017)	tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2016)	kay@kayniyo.com
Chris Rurik (2018)	chrisrurik@gmail.com
Ira Sanders (2017)	zroadrunner14@gmail.com
Karen von Saltza (2017)	kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Sue Summers (2016)	summersue@hotmail.com
Lynn Willcockson (2017)	lynnliz2698@aol.com

HISTORIAN

Kristine Haglund	303-906-8044	kahaglund1@aol.com
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FIELD TRIP SCHEDULERS

January	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

COMMITTEE DIRECTORS

Field Trips	Karen von Saltza	kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Grants	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org
Nominating	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Communications Director	Will Burt	willburt43@gmail.com
Web Administration (http://dfobirds.org)	Mary Geder	admin@dfobirds.org
	Kay Niyo	admin@dfobirds.org
The Lark Bunting Editor	Kay Niyo	kay@kayniyo.com
The Lark Bunting Designer	Debbie Marshall, Marshall Publishing	marshallpublish@gmail.com

LINKS AND CONTACTS

DFO Facebook	Photos and discussion	facebook.com/groups/dfobirds
COBirds	Internet bird-sighting discussion list	cobirds@googlegroups.com
DMNS Liaison	Jeff Stephenson	jstephenson@dmns.org
Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome, new members: Jason Bidgood, Denver; Monica Lenahan and Newton Williams, Wheat Ridge

Upcoming Speakers

Nathan Pieplow

"Hearing
Evolution" Apr. 25, 2016

Eric Eaton

"Beyond Birding:
Getting to Know
Insects" Sept. 26, 2016

Kevin Cook

"200 Miles of Birding
in 200 Years" Oct. 24, 2016

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| ☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 25 |
| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 40 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26) | \$ 10 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

Better Birding

Birdsong by Bicycle

Photos Wanted



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/JUNE 2016/VOL 52 NO 6

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://dfobirds.org)

Field Trips

Mt Lindo Cemetery and Turkey Creek Park

Saturday, June 4

6:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen Drozda & Mary Geder
(Email: drozforte@AOL.com
Phone: 303-388-0891)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at the Home Depot at 4277 S Eldridge Street, Morrison, to carpool.

From C-470 going west to Highway 285, go south on Highway 285 to S Eldridge. Home Depot sign can be seen from the highway.

We will travel to Turkey Creek Park to explore warblers, flycatchers, etc. We may do a moderate climb up the hill behind Tiny Town.

Ovenbirds have been known to nest there as well as other foothill migrants.

From there we will return to vehicles and drive 2 miles up a well maintained gravel road to Mt Lindo Memorial Park. The diverse habitat includes Gambel oak, aspen, Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine.

We should have Green-tailed Towhee, Western Tanager, flycatcher, sapsuckers. We will be quietly sitting and observing bird activity and bird song.

Leader recommends *What the Robin Knows* by Jon Young as a good preparation for the trip.

If desired bring a lawn chair or stool for sitting. Bring a hearty snack and beverages. We should return to Home Depot by 12 p.m.

Continued on page 2

DFO approves slate of officers, directors

by Kris Haglund

DFO President Joe Roller opened the April 25, 2016, annual business meeting in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science Morgridge Family Exploration Center.

Joe thanked each current DFO officer and board member. He noted that Mary Geder, Mark Amershek, and Mary Driscoll are retiring from the board at this meeting, and Kay Niyo is retiring as secretary.

The DFO Nominating Committee Chair, Bill Wuerthele, announced the committee's nominations and called for nominations from the floor. There were none.

Bill moved that the DFO members present approve the slate of officers as presented. The motion was seconded and the slate passed unanimously.

Continued on page 3



Boreal Owl, Cameron Pass, 9 April 2016. See page 4. *Ivan Mota*

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Summer conditions, prepare appropriately. **Register online or contact leader.**

Staunton State Park (Jefferson County)

Sunday, June 5

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Sue Summers & Wendy Wibbens (Email: summerssue@hotmail.com Phone: 253-678-3721)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Take U.S. Highway 285 south to Shaffers Crossing, about 6 miles west of Conifer.

Turn north on Elk Creek Road and follow the signs 1.5 miles to the park entrance. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Meet at the Mason Creek trailhead parking lot at Staunton State Park (go past the first parking lot and turn right).

Bring binoculars, water, hat, sunscreen, bug repellent, snacks, and sturdy hiking shoes.

Route will be 2-4 miles of moderately strenuous hiking at 8000 feet and higher with potential for short steep inclines.

Habitat can include ponderosa pine, aspen, mountain riparian, meadows, and cliffs. Species may include a variety of woodpeckers, thrushes, flycatchers, vireos, kinglets, nuthatches, and raptors as well as migrants.

Our focus will be on observing bird behavior, breeding activity, analyzing field marks and sounds for an in depth learning experience.

All levels of birders welcome for this participatory style trip.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on next page

DFO members-only summer picnic ***'Bringing birders and bratwurst together'***

We hope that you will join some of your best "Birding Buddies" for a great day of fun and fellowship at the DFO "Members Only" Picnic.

Saturday, June 11

Castlewood Canyon State Park [Click Here for a Map](#)

(or type <http://tinyurl.com/z7xklvs> into your browser)

9 a.m. for birding, 11 a.m. for the picnic

Click here to [RSVP](#) by June 7

(or type <http://tinyurl.com/haz64rb> into your browser)

DFO will provide the facility (2 pavilions with covered seating) along with bratwursts and drinks. A vegetarian option will be available if you let us know in advance.

The cost is \$5 per person (children under 12 are free) and we are asking that each adult bring a potluck item for 8 people as follows:

A - H Please bring a salad

I - Q Please bring a side dish

R - Z Please bring a dessert

We'll have the grill fired up in time to serve lunch about 11:45, so plan to arrive with your potluck item no later than 11 a.m. to allow time to get your item set out and find a place to sit.

Even better, show up earlier and take advantage of the great birding opportunities that Castlewood Canyon holds.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Unlike our monthly meetings and weekly field trips, this event is not "open to the public." Immediate family members or significant others are fine though. Encourage your friends who are not DFO members to join DFO!
- Carpooling is encouraged. If possible try to come with a friend or friends who are also DFO members.
- Every vehicle must have either a *current annual State Parks Pass* or please purchase a *Day Pass* when you arrive.
- We will be collecting \$5 per person "at the door" so please bring cash or check. No credit cards please.

Enter the park at the SE entrance and follow the road for about 0.4 miles to the shelter area. The picnic will be in shelters 1 and 2.

The DFO Member Picnic promises to be a fun time for all. We'll look forward to seeing you there!

Officers (one-year term)

Joe Roller	President
Bob Shade	Vice President
Sue Summers	Treasurer
Kris Haglund	Secretary
Mary Cay Burger	Membership Chair

Bill moved that the DFO members present approve the slate of the board of directors as presented. The motion was seconded and the slate passed unanimously.

Board of Directors (three-year term)

Tom Behnfield
Susan Blansett
Kay Niyo

President Joe Roller applauded the work of the Nominating Committee (Bill Wuerthele, Candice Johnson, and Joe Roller) and noted that it is active year round researching and meeting with individuals to find good candidates to lead the organization.

The evening's program "Hearing Evolution" was presented by Nathan Pieplow discussing how birdsong can reveal evolutionary history. See article in this issue of *The Lark Bunting*.

'Listening to a Continent Sing': birdsong by bicycle from the Atlantic to the Pacific

Birdsong expert Donald Kroodsma shares stories from his incredible 10-week, 10-state bicycle journey with his son, from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Kroodsma's book *Listening to a Continent Sing* is a celebration of singing birds and the voices of people along the way. From birds to flowers and trees, rocks and rivers, mountains and prairies, clouds and sky, weather and winds, Kroodsma brings the land to life as he shares this amazing journey with his son.

Join us as we take the slow road with him from Virginia to Oregon. Denver Museum of Nature and Science presents in partnership with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies.

DMNS Ricketson Auditorium
Thursday, May 26, 7 p.m.

Tickets:

\$8 Museum or Bird Conservancy of the Rockies member, \$10 nonmember
Reservations are encouraged for all After Hours events. Please visit our [online ticketing store](http://www.dmns.org/learn/adults/after-hours/). You may call at 303.370.6000, Daily, 9-5.
<http://www.dmns.org/learn/adults/after-hours/>

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Meyer Ranch Park

Sunday, June 12

6:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen Drozda & Mary Geder
(Email: drozforte@AOL.com
Phone: 303-388-0891)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Home Depot at 4277 South Eldridge Street, Morrison. From C-470 going west to Highway 285, go south on Highway 285 to S. Eldridge. Home Depot sign can be seen from the highway.

Explore the historic ranch and its moist meadow and woodland habitats. Some expected birds are Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Warbling Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, Evening Grosbeak.

Bring hat, sunscreen, bug spray, binoculars, snacks, and water. Dress for seasonal mountain weather. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands

Loop (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, June 12

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP. From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles. Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly.

Bring water and snacks; lunch

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

is optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Bailey Nesting Area (Summit County)

Friday, June 17

6:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Paul Slingsby & Chris Blakeslee (Email: paslingsby@comcast.net Phone: 303-422-3728)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the lower end of the Stegosaurus Park-n-Ride.

From I-70, exit 259, drive south under I-70 and take the second left turn into the Park-n-Ride. We will carpool 65 miles from there to the Bailey Nesting Area.

The trailhead road, about 4 miles, can be driven by most passenger cars. The trail is a moderately steep 4-wheel-drive road with some off trail walking.

We will walk less than 3 miles with minimal altitude gain. We hope to see mountain nesting species and will likely find nests. Moose have been seen in this area.

Bring lunch, water, clothing adequate for a mountain shower. We will be back to Stegosaurus by 5 p.m. **Register online or contact leader.**

Upper Beaver Meadows Rocky Mountain National Park

Friday, June 17

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Bill Wuerthele (Email: wuerthel@ecentral.com Phone: 303-333-2519)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Upper

Continued on next page

CSU students, DFO snowshoe in search of Boreal Owls on Cameron Pass

by Francis Commercon

Night fell at Cameron Pass. At 10,000 ft, on the wintry flanks of the Never Summer Mountains, we took our positions in the forest.

On the evening of 9 April 2016, a group of twenty-two intrepid birders from CSU Field Ornithologists and Denver Field Ornithologists embarked on an ambitious nocturnal snowshoe expedition in search of the rare and secretive Boreal Owl.

Our spirits were high as the darkness settled in. The day had begun with a spectacular Prothonotary Warbler in Fort Collins, easily located in Lee Martinez Park only minutes after it was first found by Jeff Birek. And we enjoyed breathtaking mountain scenery along the journey to the owls' predicted whereabouts.

Over the two-hour walk in, we experienced surprising bird diversity in the spruce-fir forests at this season. Indeed spring seems to have arrived in these mountains, which only eight days ago remained firmly in the icy grip of winter.

Despite four to five feet of snow in places, the trees rang with the calls of American Robins. Some in the group were treated to special looks at a gorgeous male Pine Grosbeak who flew in over the treetops to perch near us in full view, singing his liquid, musical notes as if in acknowledgment of our admiration.

Perhaps most surprising were two American Dippers who had discovered a small trickle of running water and hopped, bobbed, and offered samples of their beautiful song beneath massive embankments of snow!

Now, enveloped by darkness, the other forest residents left the stage to the Boreal Owl. Thanks to scouting efforts by Andy Bankert, we knew an owl inhabited these parts. But whether it would sing tonight, and whether we

Continued on page 5



Prothonotary Warbler, Fort Collins, 9 April 2016. Dean Shoup



Boreal Owl, Cameron Pass, 9 April 2016. *Prat Rudra*

BOREAL OWLS, continued from page 4

would have the opportunity to get even a fleeting glimpse, remained entirely unknown.

Three-quarters of an hour passed slowly as we stood silently, motionless in wait for the faintest call in the distance. Our ears strained past the rush of the wind and the inconsiderate patter of snow blowing against our jackets. We played a tape—perhaps we might entice a response through a bit of trickery. Minutes passed. Then it called. Again and again it called, and then it stopped.

The three groups who had been watching potential nesting holes convened and moved uphill toward a clearing nearer the source of the calls. I played the tape again over my speaker.

Silently, almost unnoticed, a shadow swooped down only a couple feet above the speaker and landed in a tall spruce nearby. Illuminated by our lights, the little bird perched up against the trunk, staring perplexed at these strange intruders into its territory who dared to trick it with tape recordings.

This bird, possibly a female responding to what she perceived as a singing male, sat in plain view of our group, a timeless, unique experience for all and a new bird for many, including myself.

When she flew away, we all knew what a rare treat this was—to witness, to see clearly, one of the few Boreal Owls inhabiting the high, snowy forests of Cameron Pass.

Thanks to all who participated for making this a very fun trip! Thanks to Chris Rurik for leading the DFO side of the trip and thanks to Andy Bankert for putting so much effort into scouting and planning!

As Andy stated, “Overall it was an awesome day with almost everyone getting a life bird, and we did have some students new to birding who got a great introduction to this amazing hobby.”

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Beaver Meadows Trailhead parking area. Travel to the Beaver Meadows Entrance Station of the park on Route 36.

To reach the trailhead, continue past the Entrance Station on Route 36 for approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile and turn left on a small road signed for Upper Beaver Meadows.

Continue to the end of the road and the small trailhead parking area.

This will be a loop hike of just under 5 miles with an elevation gain and loss of approximately 800 feet.

We will begin on the Deer Mountain Trail and then follow the Beaver Mountain and Ute trails to complete the loop.

Participants should bring appropriate clothing for the season, including rain gear, and wear shoes appropriate for hiking on a rocky trail.

Bring water, lunch, sunscreen, and insect repellent. We will travel through several different habitats including sagebrush meadow, ponderosa pine, and lodgepole, which support a variety of species.

Breeding activity will be underway and the woods should be full of birdsong.

The trip is planned for a weekday to avoid crowds. Carpooling to the park is recommended. An annual or day pass is required. **Register online or contact leader.**

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

Lyons Area (Boulder and Larimer County)

Saturday, June 18

8:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Raymond Davis (Email: davis@greenspeedisp.net Phone: 303-823-5332)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Lyons Park-n-Ride 1/2 block south of Main St on 4th Ave (by the skateboard park and visitor center w/bathrooms).

Join Davis for his always fascinating trip around the Lyons area. We'll be finding nesting birds around Lyons and in Davis's 45 bird houses.

Trip will include walking on level ground for 1-3 miles around Lyons, birding by car, and then eating lunch and birding on Davis's decks at his mountain home.

Chance for bobolink, herons, 4 swallows, 1-2 eagles, 2 wrens, 2 chickadees, 4-6 finches, multiple species of flycatchers, hummingbirds, and much more.

Good photo opportunities likely and all are welcome. Wheelchair accessible. **Register online or contact leader.**

Jackson Lake Reservoir

Sunday, June 19

6:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Ira Sanders & Tammy Sanders (Email: zroadrunner14@gmail.com Phone: 303-278-7172)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right to carpool.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: *Hearing Evolution*

Tim Johnson

About 140 lucky people found the April 25 meeting in temporary quarters at the DMNS Morgridge Center and were treated to a return visit by Nathan Pieplow, Associate Director and Instructor in the Residential Academic Program-Global and Program for Writing and Rhetoric at the University of Colorado-Boulder.

Nathan's interests, aside from writing, revolve around birdsong. His book *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Eastern North America* is scheduled to appear next February, and a companion volume for Western North America in 2018. His thought-provoking talk was entitled "Hearing Evolution."

Nathan began by discussing the ongoing upheaval in bird taxonomy, noting that the rapid changes in understanding of avian relationships, and their confusing consequences in the order of families in guides and lists, result largely from the recent revolution in DNA sequencing technology and analysis.

Taxonomists of the 19th and 20th centuries relied on quantifiable, macroscopic characteristics to construct phylogenetic relationships, and were unable to establish the temporal order of evolutionary branch points with certainty.

Thus, to use one of Nathan's examples, the Regulidae (kinglets and crests) consist of about five species scattered across Europe, Africa, Asia, and North America, and are currently considered so closely related as to be in a single genus (*Regulus*). But a glance at these birds shows quite a bit of morphological diversity as well as similarity, and clearly more data would be needed to sort out the details of their evolutionary relationships. Nathan's purpose was to show that, perhaps surprisingly, bird calls and songs provide such data and show the same trends as DNA analysis.

The rest of Nathan's talk consisted of different kinds of illustrations of this point. He first showed spectrograms and played recordings of call notes from the two closely related families containing New World warblers and sparrows, exemplified by Prairie Warbler and Fox Sparrow, respectively. You had to be there, but the similarity of sound and spectrogram was obvious.

A further example compared call notes from a bunting (Indigo Bunting) to the sparrow family above: still similar, but less so, in line with the genetic data.

He then played calls from instances in which birds had been moved out of their taxonomic category on the basis of genetics. One dramatic example was the Chestnut-collared Longspur, recently moved from sparrows to a separate family, and whose sounds indeed bore no relationship to those of its former family.

Another notable example was the American Tree Sparrow, recently moved to its own genus from the genus *Spizella*, which contains the lookalike Chipping Sparrow. Comparison of spectrograms and other features (number of distinct calls, the amount of repetition in songs, characteristics of flock calls) indicates a closer relationship with the *Zonotrichia* genus (Song Sparrow, White-Crowned Sparrow, etc.), which is what the genetic data indicates. The similarity in appearance is in this case misleading.

A difference in appearance can also be misleading. Nathan showed that

Continued on page 7



American Avocet, Belmar Park, 1 May 2016. Alistair Montgomery

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 6

the song and calls of the Upland Sandpiper, superficially resembling a large sandpiper, are quite similar to those of the Long-billed Curlew to which it is more closely related.

I must omit other interesting discussions, e.g., concerning the status of the Dickcissel and the Yellow-breasted Chat.

As a finale, Nathan spoke about kinglets and crests, as mentioned. Examining the spectrograms and listening to the calls and songs, it was clear that the Ruby-crowned Kinglet stood apart from the Golden-crowned Kinglet, Goldcrest, Firecrest, and Flamecrest, although the calls, especially, were very similar. The sounds and the DNA suggest that the Ruby-crowned Kinglet and the ancestor of the other genus members split from the same common ancestor. The oldest known Regulid fossil is about two million years. This implies that some kinglet vocalizations have been very stable for a very long time—it's like finding out that *Homo erectus* would recognize some words in today's languages.

I hope Nathan returns soon. Try his website (<http://earbirding.com>), and look and listen to the entry on ravens (<http://earbirding.com/blog/archives/4736>) for a sense of what evolution can sound like.

Field Trips

Continued from page 6

This is an all-day trip so bring lunch, plenty of water, bug spray, and sunscreen. Scopes will be helpful and remember your mud boots as we may hike through some mud.

Radios are a necessity to keep the cars in communication. Be prepared to either drive or ride since the limit for cars is 4.

We will leave at 6:15 sharp.

Register online or contact leader.

Barr Lake State Park

Saturday, June 25

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Gregg Goodrich (Email: GreggGoodrich@gmail.com
Phone: 303-655-9135)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass or day pass required.

From Denver, take east I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Rd, then turn south for ~2 miles to park entrance and follow road to Visitor Center.

This is an eBird Mobile training field trip. The pace will be slower. Requirements for the trip include an Android or iPhone, an eBird account on eBird.org (My eBird), and the eBird Mobile app loaded on your smart phone.

Leader will send out instructions a week before the trip, so sign up early if you want to learn how to log your birds into the eBird app in the field and then submit them directly to your eBird account online at eBird.org.

If you already use the eBird app in the field, feel free to sign up and share your knowledge.

Bring snacks, lunch, and

Continued on page 8

Bird Conservancy BBQ for the Birds

Join many birders on May 21 for the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies picnic and member get-together!

The BBQ for the Birds is free and open to the public with a \$10 suggested donation.

Enjoy birding at Barr Lake with Birding4Buck\$ in the morning followed by a delicious BBQ lunch from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. with volunteer recognition ceremonies, displays, and presentations.

See <http://birdconservancy.org> for more details. Old Stone House at Barr Lake, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane, Brighton, CO.

Field Trips

Continued from page 7

plenty of water. **Register online or contact leader.**

Parker Regional Park

Sunday, June 26

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Mary Cay Burger (Email: mcburger3@juno.com)

Phone: 720-940-8394)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From Main St intersection in Parker, go south on Parker Rd (CO 83) for 1.2 miles. Turn right on Indianpipe Ln and right into McCabe Meadows parking lot in Salisbury Park (Parker Regional Park).

We bird along the Cherry Creek Trail.

Take an easy walk along the Cherry Creek bike trail and back to the water department pond.

Bring snack, water, sunscreen, etc. Possible wrens, gnatcatchers, towhees, and summer visitors. **Register online or contact leader.**

—Scheduled by Mary Geder



Great Horned Owl and nestling, Sutherland Shire Park, South Kipling and Kentucky, 29 April 2016. Alistair Montgomery

Welcome, new members: Shelagh Adams, Castle Rock; Phill Bird, Arvada; Giuseppe and Roxana Rogers De Sole, Parker; Paula Hansen, Wheat Ridge; Linda Henry, Denver; Ben Lagasse, Littleton; Kerrie Lagon, Centennial; Sandra Hoyle and Steve Methven, Denver; Diane Roberts, Lone Tree; Kristin Spraberry, Conifer; Peggy Stark, Littleton; John Whitaker, Centennial

Denver Field Ornithologists

OFFICERS

President	Joe Roller	jroller9@gmail.com
Vice President	Bob Shade	wrshade3@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sue Summers	summerssue@hotmail.com
Secretary	Kristine Haglund	kahaglund1@aol.com
Membership Chair	Mary Cay Burger	mcburger3@juno.com
Past President	Chuck Hundertmark	chundertmark8@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tom Behnfield (2019)	behnfield@q.com
Susan Blansett (2019)	susanblansett@gmail.com
Will Burt (2018)	willburt43@gmail.com
Candice Johnson (2018)	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org
Tina Jones (2017)	tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2019)	kay@kayniyo.com
Chris Rurik (2018)	chrisrurik@gmail.com
Ira Sanders (2017)	zroadrunner14@gmail.com
Karen von Saltza (2017)	kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Lynn Willcockson (2017)	lynnliz2698@aol.com

HISTORIAN

Kristine Haglund	303-906-8044	kahaglund1@aol.com
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FIELD TRIP SCHEDULERS

January	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

COMMITTEE DIRECTORS

Field Trips	Karen von Saltza	kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Grants	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org
Nominating	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Communications Director	Will Burt	willburt43@gmail.com
Web Administration (http://dfobirds.org)	Susan Blansett	admin@dfobirds.org
	Kay Niyo	admin@dfobirds.org
The Lark Bunting Editor	Kay Niyo	kay@kayniyo.com
The Lark Bunting Designer	Debbie Marshall, Marshall Publishing	marshallpublish@gmail.com

LINKS AND CONTACTS

DFO Facebook	Photos and discussion	facebook.com/groups/dfobirds
COBirds	Internet bird-sighting discussion list	cobirds@googlegroups.com
DMNS Liaison	Jeff Stephenson	jstephenson@dmns.org
Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Giuseppe and Roxana Rogers De Sole, Jeane and Glenn Hageman, Paula Hansen, Kerrie Lagon

Upcoming Speakers

Steve Jones

"Sandhills Serenade"

Aug. 22, 2016

Eric Eaton

"Beyond Birding:

Getting to Know

Insects"

Sept. 26, 2016

Kevin Cook

"200 Miles of Birding

in 200 Years"

Oct. 24, 2016

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

- | | | |
|---|----|-------|
| ☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ | 25 |
| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ | 40 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26) | \$ | 10 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ | _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

Summer Picnic

Midnight Trip

Hearing Evolution



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/JULY 2016/VOL 52 NO 7

HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG

Field Trips

Staunton State Park (Jefferson County) Friday, July 1

6:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Jill Boice (Email:
jill@booksandcats.net
Phone: 303-863-7580)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate
Maximum Participants: 16
Directions: Take U.S. Highway
285 south to Shaffers Crossing,
about 6 miles west of Conifer.

Turn north on Elk Creek Road
and follow the signs 1.5 miles to
the park entrance. State Parks
pass or day pass required.

Guest leader is Chris Gilbert.
Meet at the group picnic area,
which provides parking just past
the entrance station.

We will explore one of Colora-
do's newer state parks. Staunton
offers a diversity of conifer
forests and riparian habitats.

We will hike about 5.5 miles,
part of which will require some
climbing. Bring water, snacks,
lunch, hat, and bug spray. **Reg-
ister online or contact leader.**

Chavez Trail and Beaver Brook Braille Trail Saturday, July 2

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Paul Slingsby (Email:
paslingsby@comcast.net
Phone: 303-422-3728)

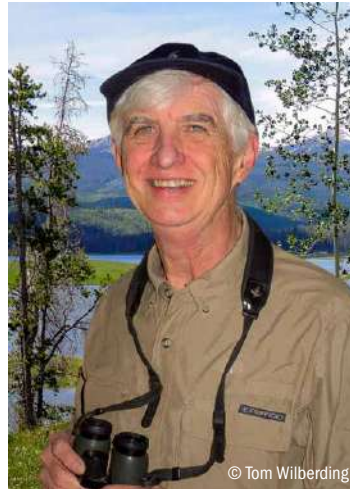
Trail Difficulty: Moderate
Maximum Participants: 16

Directions: Meet at the lower
end of the Stegosaurus Park-n-
Ride. We will carpool from there.

From I-70, exit 259, turn left
onto CO 26; drive under I-70
bridge and look for the Park-n-

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Busy Board enhances membership value



From the President

Joe Roller

Denver Field Ornithologists is thriving! Membership is growing, with top-notch field trips and engaging evening presentations, and the DFO Board is full of busy officers and directors.

Elected in April were Sue Summers, treasurer; Susan Blansett, development and growth; Tom Behnfield, picnic planner; and Kris Haglund, secretary, who continues as historian.

The board continues to work on a number of projects to enhance value to you, the members. Here is a review of what's going on at DFO, now in its 81st year.

Our DFO Summer Picnic—a Blast from the Past that will Last!

June 11 marks the rebirth of DFO members-only summer picnics. Did you RSVP by June 9 to join us at Castlewood

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Chestnut-sided Warbler, Illinois, 16 May 2016. Also can be seen in Colorado in spring migration. *Ira Sanders*

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Ride on your left. We will carpool 6 miles to the trailhead.

Half-day trip. This will be a slow walk of about 2 miles on smooth, moderately steep trails with some unmaintained paths in aspen and ponderosa forests. Hope for fledglings.

Lunch optional. **Register online or contact leader.**

Mt. Falcon Park (Jefferson County)

Saturday, July 2

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen Drozda (Email: drozforte@AOL.com)

Phone: 303-388-0891)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 18

Directions: Meet at upper parking lot of west side of Mount Falcon Park. From C-470 and U.S. 285 South, turn right at the Indian Hills exit to Parmalee Gulch Road.

Follow Parmalee Gulch Road for approximately 2.5 miles to Picutis Road, turn right at Picutis, then follow the signs for Mt. Falcon to the upper parking area.

We will explore this ponderosa pine habitat. Expected birds: Western Bluebird, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Rock Wren, Dusky Grouse, Western Tanager, and Townsend's Solitaire.

Much of this trip involves moderate climbing in the sun. Bring lunch, water, snacks, binoculars, camera, hat, sunscreen, and bug spray. **Register online or contact leader.**

Genesee Park (Denver Mountain Parks)

Sunday, July 3

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Kathanne Lynch (Email: kathanne Lynch@gmail.com)

Phone: 303-968-4750)

Continued on next page



Hooded Warbler, Illinois, 15 May 2016. Also can be seen in Colorado in spring migration. *Ira Sanders*

PRESIDENT, continued from page 1

Canyon State Park? (RSVP at <http://dfobirds.org/DFO/News.aspx?id=43>). At press time 76 of you had signed up. This *Lark Bunting* may reach you right after the brats have been grilled. I'm guessing there was a happy trio of birding, grub, and camaraderie.

DFO owes a big "Thank You" to its newest director, Tom Behnfield, our Picnic Honcho and Guru of the Grill. Let's make this an annual tradition. What else would you like to see DFO try out?

Mary Cay Burger tells us that DFO membership is growing! As of June 1 we have 424 paid members (up 45 since May 2013) with 38 new members so far this year. Welcome your friends to join the fun.

Although DFO field trips and program meetings are free and open to the public, we thrive because of members like you who have joined DFO. We are hearing from younger members who tell us they discovered DFO's website with an online search.

DFO has a new, eye-catching, 6 feet-long logo banner! Mary Cay hoists the banner and hosts DFO tables wherever birders flock, e.g., at CFO and BCR events. We'll show it off at the picnic and the August 22 evening meeting.

Karen von Saltza directs our Field Trip Committee and produced the

Continued on page 3

informative participants' guide: *Better Birding with DFO* (http://dfobirds.org/Documents/DFO_Better_Birding.pdf). If you haven't read it, please do so now. It's darned good!

What's in the works? A Field Trip Leader Certification Workshop this summer and Field Trip Leader Forum in the fall.

More field trips are being held, but demand is growing too, so they are filling up fast. Your goal is our goal—more time in the field and less on the waiting lists.

So we'll train more leaders this summer, and then set up even more field trips. Want to be a leader? Let us know! You don't need to be an experienced birder to lead a field trip. The secrets—get trained and entice other birders to sign up.

And we're branching out. Boreal Owl? Prothonotary Warbler? Both species were seen on the April 9th DFO field trip held in conjunction with the budding CSU Field Ornithologists in Fort Collins.

When Director Chris Rurik isn't leading field trips like that one, he is working hard with Audubon Society of Greater Denver, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, and Bluff Lake Nature Center to make the idea of a Front Range Youth Birding Club a reality.

Chris also represents DFO and the birding community in general at a new roundtable between Colorado Parks and Wildlife and wildlife- and habitat-oriented groups throughout the state. The goal is to increase communication.

Kay Niyo, one of our hardest working directors, is editor of *The Lark Bunting* and comes up with fresh issues month after month. She encourages members to submit articles and bird photos.

As website administrator, Kay works with consultant Ann Johnson who adds features, improves security, and makes the DFO website more valuable to members. Don't you love how easy it is to read about field trips and then sign up online? That's just one of the website's many useful features.

Able Historian Kris Haglund leads a team of devoted volunteers who are hard at work digitizing old DFO program texts and board minutes, then posting them on our website at <http://dfobirds.org/DFO/History.aspx>. They also have digitized interviews with long-time members Lynn Wilcockson, Bill and Sylvia Brockner, and Karl Stecher, with more interviews to come.

Director Susan Blansett advises, "Look for the online DFO survey coming in June or July—your chance to give feedback to the board." Susan is developing the survey to help us learn how DFO can grow in value and membership, which are the themes of the board's fall planning retreat, the first in four years.

Sue Summers was elected treasurer in April, but even before then she and Mary Geder worked to modernize club finances with QuickBooks software. That system is now in place, so kudos to Mary and Sue. Financial controls have been added, and year-to-year budget comparisons are easier.

DFO Bylaws require that a financial review be done every three years or after a change in treasurer, and it's on the board's agenda now.

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Driving west, take exit 254 off of I-70 and cross to the south side of I-70. Turn right on Genesee Mountain Rd.

Drive 1.6 miles to the large, 100-car, gravel group-picnic parking lot. NOTE: Go right at the Road Closed sign at Mile 1.5.

Please note **Genesee Park is in transition, and most roads are closed.** As a result, we will walk on footpaths rather than on gravel roads. Wear sturdy hiking shoes.

There is an option to walk down the gravel road from the flagpole, but all other walking is unfortunately non-accessible and on trails.

Elevation change is a gentle 200 feet, and there are 30 wooden steps. Please bring water, sunscreen, and a hat. Lunch is optional in the park, as this trip will end at about 11.

We will bird Genesee Park on the south side of I-70 up to the flagpole.

This trip is for beginner birders, and for experienced birders who want to revisit the summer birds and the park.

Species with young may include Williamson's Sapsucker, Violet-green Swallow, Western Bluebird, and House Wren.

Summer migrants will likely include Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Western Tanager, Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Lesser Goldfinch.

Likely resident species are Red-tailed Hawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Steller's Jay, Mountain Chickadee, all three nuthatches, and Dark-eyed Junco. **Register online or contact leader.**

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Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Rocky Mountain National Park (Larimer County)

Thursday, July 7

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Edmund J Holub (Email:
edmund.holub@gmail.com
Phone: 303-979-2194)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: Meet at the RMNP
Visitor Center parking lot east
of the RMNP Beaver Meadows
entrance station on U.S. 36.

This is a weekday trip to try to
avoid weekend congestion in the
park. Trip will be a 3/4 day trip.

We plan to consolidate to 3
cars. Please check the "who
else is going" box and make
every effort to carpool from the
Metro area also.

You need a parks pass or plan to
ride with someone who has one.

We will make several stops
with fairly easy walking, but
at altitude. Possible birds are
Mountain Bluebirds, Golden-
crowned Kinglet, Lincoln's
Sparrow, woodpeckers, includ-
ing Williamson's Sapsucker, and
flycatchers.

Bring water, snacks, and
lunch. **Register online or con-
tact leader.**

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt)

Saturday, July 9

7:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.
king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-
3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit
267, take Kipling south about
3/4 mile and turn right (west) on
44th Avenue. Go one mile west.
Look for the entrance to Pros-
pect Park on your left (south).

Meet just inside the park in

Continued on next page

PRESIDENT, continued from page 3

The Nominating Committee is on the lookout for officer and director candidates to fill positions that will become vacant next spring. The committee (Bill Wuerthele, Candice Johnson, and Joe Roller) encourages the membership to become more engaged in the nominating process by suggesting candidates to fill officer and director vacancies. Simply suggest a name to any Nominating Committee or board member.

The committee will publish reminders in *The Lark Bunting* and provide index cards at our monthly meetings so that you can easily submit candidate suggestions. As you may know the committee works year-round, interviews candidates, and matches them to board needs. DFO's board is a "working board," with each member filling a role.

A recent bylaws review found that the concept of "nominations from the floor" was unused and impractical. That provision became outmoded over the decades by the improved nominating process tailored to our now much larger DFO membership. The board voted unanimously to strike that provision from the bylaws.

Bob Shade continues to schedule engaging speakers for DFO's Monday evening programs. And you know what I mean when you see how the seats fill up in the Ricketson Auditorium. Programs resume on August 22.

Our other directors, Will Burt, Tina Jones, Ira Sanders, and Lynn Wilcockson, work behind the scenes to keep the DFO train on the tracks. Thanks to all!

Donated books available at meetings

A BIG THANK YOU to Glenn and Jeane Hageman who donated their bird books to the DFO Grants Fund. We offered some of them at the April DFO meeting.

At the August DFO meeting at the DMNS, we will put out some more books for you to select. We only ask that you make a donation to the DFO Grants donation box. It will probably take about four meetings to present all of them.

**Welcome, new members: Gretchen Wilson
and Tom Avery, Denver; Mary Beverly, Parker;
Jared Del Rosso, Centennial; Dwight Harts
and Nancy Harts, Arvada; Potter Perryman
and Eric Perryman, Denver; Diane Roberts,
Lone Tree; Susan Rosine, Thornton; Sharon
Tinianow, Denver**



Hermit Thrush stunned in collision with my large window on Bear Mt. in Evergreen. It survived and flew away on 9 September 2005. *Kay Niyo*

Stop birds from dying at your windows

by *Kay Niyo*

DFO had a recent inquiry about solutions to bird/window crashes. I offer a method that has been effective for me for years.

This is a prime season for young birds that fly into windows and are stunned or killed. The bird sees the natural habitat mirrored in the window glass and flies directly into the window.

I lost a few beautiful birds (juvenile Western Tanager, Hairy Woodpecker) to my large windows when I lived on Bear Mt. in Evergreen until I tried a new solution.

I bought a roll of 1 and 3/16th inch blue plastic "flagging tape" for about \$1.50 at the local hardware store. I taped strips about a foot apart to the outside tops of the 6 ft windows that were a risk to the birds.

They fluttered in the breeze for years and I never had another bird crash into a window. Rarely a tape would get blown off in high winds and I replaced it.

When I moved to Golden, I lost a couple Lesser Goldfinches to my front upper windows that have no outer screens. I taped strips of the blue tape to the *inside* of the upper windows. No more bird crashes into the window. Birds see the blue strips as a barrier.

Window strikes are estimated to kill many millions of birds/year. <http://www.sibleyguides.com/conservation/causes-of-bird-mortality/> It is heart-breaking to attract birds to our yards and feeders only to see them killed.

So, try this simple, inexpensive solution. As a bird photographer with years of experience photographing my yard birds through the glass, you can avoid the blue strips to photograph your unusual birds through the window.

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

This is a trip with easy walking and accessible for mobility-impaired individuals. This section of Prospect Park has a rich diversity of birds, often with some surprises.

Bring water and a snack. Good trip for novice birders and new members. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, July 10

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP. From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half-day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park, over a distance of about three miles.

Trails can be slippery, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Mt. Evans area (Jefferson and Clear Creek Counties)

Friday, July 15

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Lynn Willcockson (Email: LynnLiz2698@aol.com
Phone: 303-757-7000)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: Meet at Fillius Park shelter house. Take I-70 west to exit 252 to Evergreen

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

Parkway (Hwy 74). Go 2.5 miles to the first traffic light and turn right into Fillius Park. We will arrange carpools for the 10-mile drive toward Mt. Evans.

Driving up toward Mount Evans, we will pass through a variety of bird-rich habitats. We may go as high as 14,000 feet, with spectacular scenery on a clear day.

We will make a number of stops and take modest strolls, including Echo Lake. Participants in past years have seen ptarmigan, Pine Grosbeaks, Rock Wrens, Brown-capped Rosy-Finches, and pipits on their breeding grounds. Mountain goats are a possibility.

Dress for changeable weather. Bring lunch, water, and snacks.

Register online or contact leader.

Meyer Ranch Park

Saturday, July 16

6:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen Drozda (Email: drozforte@AOL.com Phone: 303-388-0891)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Home Depot at 4277 South Eldridge St, Morrison. From C-470 going west to Highway 285, go south on Highway 285 to S. Eldridge. Home Depot sign can be seen from the highway.

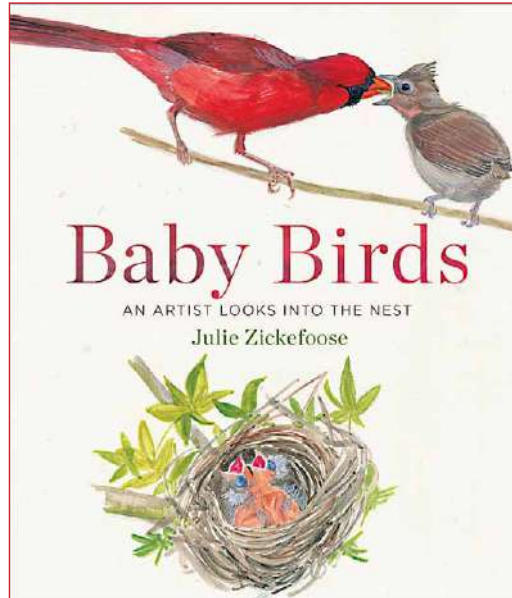
Explore the historic ranch and its moist meadow and woodland habitats. Some expected birds are Vesper Sparrow, Warbling Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, and Evening Grosbeak.

Bring hat, sunscreen, bug spray, binoculars, snacks, and water. Dress for seasonal mountain weather. **Register online or contact leader.**

Continued on next page

Book Review

Kayleen A. Niyo



Baby Birds: An Artist Looks into the Nest by Julie Zickefoose. 2016. 352 pp, watercolor paintings, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York. ISBN-13: 978-0544206700. \$25 (hardcover).

In this beautiful new book, wildlife rehabilitator, artist, and author (*The Bluebird Effect*, 2012) Julie Zickefoose illustrates the amazingly fast development of 17 species of wild birds with more than 400 watercolor paintings and text.

Many of these birds nest on Julie's Appalachian Ohio wildlife sanctuary.

Encouraged by other well-known ornithologist painters to break new artistic and scientific ground, Julie began painting nestlings daily in 2002, resulting in these detailed development studies.

For most of the species portrayed, Julie "borrowed" a wild nestling from the nest for 20 minutes or so, drew it, and returned it to the nest each day until nearly ready to fledge.

She always fed the baby and the others in the nest to be sure they weren't stressed. She only worked with nests whose safety she could virtually guarantee.

A couple of species (such as the Prothonotary Warbler) were painted from photos sent to her by a fellow rehabilitator who was fortunate to have a nesting pair.

Birders will be fascinated as I was by the development of the pteryxae or feather tracts in the various altricial bird chicks. Some species have no down. Others have lots. Developmental species differences make sense as each day goes by.

Tree swallows, constant creatures of the air, have much faster wing development. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are naked with large yellow strands of down on their backs resembling the very toxic black-waved flannel moth, *Megalopyge crispata*.

Cardinals nest 3–6 feet above ground. So to avoid ground predation their nestlings must develop strong legs fast to be able to climb out of the nest into surrounding shrubs at the very early age of seven days even though they can't fly yet.

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo lays extremely large eggs. From nest building to fledging takes only 17 days. The chicks are feathered out by Day 7 and

Continued on page 7

running on branches by Day 8. Researchers have learned that sudden caterpillar outbreaks can cause the Yellow-billed Cuckoo to lay excess eggs in other cuckoo nests as well as a few other species' nests, especially those with blue eggs.

Chimney Swift nestlings in their beautiful twig and saliva nest (that was knocked down by a chimney sweep) were brought to her to try and save.

They presented a new learning experience. Raised in a dark chimney, their eyes don't open until Day 14. Early development includes very strong toes for clinging, which they need throughout life.

They gape for food facing down over the edge of the nest to accommodate the parent who flies into the chimney with a big bolus of insects and hangs from the side of the nest to feed the nestlings.

My only frustration with the book was that a few of the hand-written notes (legends) for the watercolors were small, faint, and difficult to read. It also is large and heavy and not a book to read in bed!

Julie, as a wildlife rehabilitator, is entranced by the mystery of rapid baby bird development. Each day a chick she carefully eases out of the nest has reinvented itself and within a few days begins looking like a real bird. She has provided a daily delightful, intimate look into the nest and lives of many baby bird species!

As she finished editing this book, "three snooty-looking baby brown thrashers arrived in a shoebox" after their hedgerow on the other side of the state was cut down. So hopefully, Julie will provide us with another great baby bird book!

Field Trips

Continued from page 6

Roxborough State Park

Sunday, July 17

7:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Doris Cruze (Email: cruzeduo@aol.com Phone: 303-798-8072)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Take S Wadsworth Blvd past Chatfield SP to Waterton Rd on left. Take Waterton Rd 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Road. Turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left (east) onto Roxborough Park Rd and then turn immediately right (south) on Roxborough Rd and follow signs to the Park (2.2 miles). State Parks pass or day pass required.

The hike starts at the Visitor's Center. We will walk the Fountain Valley Trail, a 2.3 mile loop trail, looking for the resident Golden Eagles and birds of the foothills such as Spotted Towhee, Western Scrub-Jay, Mountain and Black-capped Chickadees, and Downy Woodpeckers. There could be some surprises. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks. Dress in layers for changing weather conditions. **Register online or contact leader.**

Barr Lake State Park

Saturday, July 23

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Gregg Goodrich (Email: GreggGoodrich@gmail.com Phone: 303-655-9135)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Barr Lake SP Visitor Center. State Parks pass or day pass required. From Denver, take east I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Rd, then turn south for ~2 miles to park entrance and follow road to Visitor Center.

Digiscoping! Learn how to take digiscoped photos using your smart phone. Gregg will discuss digi-adaptors and how to use the power of your spotting scope to take good photos of birds. Digiscoped photos have many advantages, including that they can be easily attached to eBird lists and other birding documentation. The group will look for good photo opportunities at bird-rich Barr Lake. Bring water, snacks, hat, and bug spray. Bring your scope and smart phone if you have them or come anyway if you don't. **Register online or contact leader.**

Rocky Mountain National Park (Larimer County)

Sunday, July 24

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Mary Cay Burger & Candice Johnson (Email: mcburger3@juno.com Phone: 720-940-8394)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 16

Directions: Meet at the RMNP Visitor Center parking lot east of the RMNP Beaver Meadows entrance station on U.S. 36.

This will be a 3/4 to all-day trip to Rocky Mountain National Park, depending on the weather and birds. We will consolidate cars at the Visitor Center, as parking in some of our spots is very limited. You need a parks pass or plan to ride with someone who does.

Continued on page 8

Field Trips

Continued from page 7

Bring lunch and clothes for changeable weather. Several stops with easy to moderate hiking. Possible birds are White-tailed Ptarmigan, Mountain Bluebirds, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Lincoln's Sparrow, flycatchers, and woodpeckers. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek State Park (Arapahoe County)

Saturday, July 30

7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Enter at the EAST entrance to the Park from South Parker Road. NOTE: this is NOT the regular meeting site for most previous trips.

Go past the entrance kiosk and take the first left turn. Continue on this road, past the east boat ramp and turn left to the "East Shades, Picnic Shelters," as shown on the park map, located on the east shore of the lake. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Look for gulls, waterfowl, and a variety of birds. Habitats include deep water, marshlands, mixed grasses, and cottonwoods. We will carpool to the various stops and walk 1-2 miles. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, sunscreen, and bug repellent. Scopes are useful. **Register online or contact leader.**

Apex Park-lower East entrance

Sunday, July 31

6:15 AM - 10:30 AM

Jill Boice (Email: jill@booksandcats.net Phone: 303-863-7580)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Parking for the East entrance is at the northeast corner of the Heritage Square parking lot. The address of Heritage Square is 18301 West Colfax, Golden.

From Metro Denver, go west on U.S. Highway 6. As you near Golden, use the left lanes to turn slightly left on U.S. 40 West (Colfax). In about a mile, U.S. 40 curves southward.

Very soon, Heritage Square signage will be on your right. Make a right into the large parking area. Stay rightward and go slightly north for the trailhead parking.

Apex Park is a Jefferson Co Park. It is a vertical park in a narrow corridor between Heritage Square on the lower eastern edge to Lookout Mountain road on the upper western side. It is steep in places. The lower slopes are somewhat exposed and can be very hot on a summer day.

We will start early and walk upward for about 2 to 3 1/2 hours, hoping to get into the enchanted forest in the middle section. Then we will turn and drop back down the way we came.

Apex offers a variety of bird rich habitats. Target birds will be Lazuli Bunting and Green-tailed Towhee. The Enchanted Forest often has a variety of flycatchers and nuthatches. Wear sturdy footwear and bring water and snacks. **Register online or contact leader.**

— Scheduled by Jill Boice

If you know you can't go, please make room for more

by Karen von Saltza

DFO field trips are filling up quickly these days. This is due in part to the size limit that many leaders place on their trips.

Limiting the size of a trip has the benefit of creating a smaller, more manageable participant group and allows the field trip leader to search for birds rather than spending time "herding cats."

To remedy this situation the DFO Field Trip Committee hopes to train more leaders this summer and add more trips to the monthly schedule.

In the meantime there is something each one of you can do.

If you realize that you will not be able to attend a field trip that you have signed up for, please go online and remove your name from the list.

This will allow a waitlisted member to be confirmed for the trip or open up space for a last minute participant to sign up.

To remove your name, go to <http://tinyurl.com/hoc39dl>. Near the top left is a box that says **Show/Edit my Upcoming Field Trips**.

When you click on this button a list of your trips will appear. To the right of each trip is a place to **Edit/Delete** your trip. Hit the **Delete** button and your job is done.

Someone else will have the opportunity to enjoy the field trip you were unable to attend.

If you are uncomfortable doing this yourself, please call your trip leader who would be happy to remove your name from the list.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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Past President	Chuck Hundertmark	chundertmark8@gmail.com

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Ira Sanders (2017)	zroadrunner14@gmail.com
Karen von Saltza (2017)	kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Lynn Willcockson (2017)	lynnliz2698@aol.com

HISTORIAN

Kristine Haglund	303-906-8044	kahaglund1@aol.com
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January	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

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Grants	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org
Nominating	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org

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	Kay Niyo	admin@dfobirds.org
The Lark Bunting Editor	Kay Niyo	kay@kayniyo.com
The Lark Bunting Designer	Debbie Marshall, Marshall Publishing	marshallpublish@gmail.com

LINKS AND CONTACTS

DFO Facebook	Photos and discussion	facebook.com/groups/dfobirds
COBirds	Internet bird-sighting discussion list	cobirds@googlegroups.com
DMNS Liaison	Jeff Stephenson	jstephenson@dmns.org
Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Mary Beverly, Bobbi Vollmer

Upcoming Speakers

Steve Jones

"Sandhills Serenade"

Aug. 22, 2016

Eric Eaton

"Beyond Birding:

Getting to Know

Insects"

Sept. 26, 2016

Kevin Cook

"200 Miles of Birding

in 200 Years"

Oct. 24, 2016

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

- | | | |
|---|----|-------|
| ☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ | 25 |
| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ | 40 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26) | \$ | 10 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ | _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

How to Delete Your Name

'Baby' Book Review

Solution to Death by Window

Featured This Month

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/AUGUST 2016/VOL 52 NO 8

HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG

Field Trips

Staunton State Park (Jefferson County)

Saturday, August 6

7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Mark Amershek (Email:
mamershek@msn.com
Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Park-
n-Ride at southwest corner of
Hampden (CO 285) and Wad-
sworth to carpool to the park.

State Parks pass or day pass
required.

Bring binoculars, water, hat,
sunscreen, bug repellent,
snacks, sturdy hiking shoes and
lunch.

This is a moderate level hike
with potential for short, steep
incline. We will hike 3-4 miles
on maintained trails.

Habitat can include ponderosa
pine, aspen, mountain riparian,

Continued on page 2



Reminder:
*DFO membership
meetings begin
August 22! Steve
Jones will pro-
vide a fascinating
presentation on
"Sandhills
Serenade"!*

When did 'the birding bug' bite you?



© Tom Wilberding

From the President

Joe Roller

Do you remember how you became inter-
ested in birds? Were you a young child or
a teen, or did "the birding bug" bite you
more recently?

I like to ask birders that question, as the
answer often evokes pleasant memories
from long ago, memories not only of the
time and place, but of the feelings—excite-
ment, enthusiasm, joy.

Just the other day I was vividly reminded
of what it's like to be a beginning birder. As
many of you know, I volunteer reviewing
eBird hotspot proposals sent in by birders
from all over Colorado.

Last week a hotspot suggestion intrigued
me, a location in Park County named
"peterburg," submitted by a Peter G.

Not only did it seem odd that the "p" was lowercase, but the teardrop pin
marker had been placed "in the middle of nowhere," a few miles southwest of
Eleven Mile Reservoir, in mountain grassland habitat, far from any road.

Curious, I responded,

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Dave Driscoll, Debbie Behnfield, Peggy Salzer (grillmaster), John and Jean Alden,
John Scott Alden. Will Burt

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

meadows, and cliffs. Species may include a variety of woodpeckers, thrushes, flycatchers, vireos, kinglets, nuthatches, and raptors.

All levels of birders welcome.
Coleader Bruce Neuman.

Register online or contact leader.

North Park Friday, August 12 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Chuck Hundertmark & Paul Slingsby (Email: chundertmark8@gmail.com
Phone: 303-604-0531)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet the leaders at the Moose Visitor Center, CO Hwy 14, at 12 noon.

This is a three-day trip. Plan to stay in Walden two nights. Lodging recommendations and additional trip information will be sent to registrants.

Our primary goal will be finding migrating shorebirds. We'll also look for breeding birds with young, particularly waterbirds and colonial nesters like ducks, grebes, and pelicans.

Scopes will be helpful. Bring lunch for the first day, sun-screen, insect repellent, and water.

Register online or contact leader.

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County) Sunday, August 14 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com
Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP. From either park entrance, fol-

Continued on next page

PRESIDENT, continued from page 1

Peter,

I am the volunteer eBird hotspot reviewer for Colorado. I'll need a little more information about the site you are proposing and how you chose the name "peterburg." For now, I will keep "peterburg" as one of your Personal Locations.

IF you are visiting Colorado, I hope that you have a wonderful birding tour! If you live in Park County, I'd like to stay in touch about birding there.

Best regards, Joe Roller, Denver

The response was prompt.

Hi Joe,

My name is Sara, and I'm Peter's mom. Peter is nine, and he is taking classes about birding and becoming a young naturalist with our Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department. He heard about eBird there and asked me if he could use it to report the bird sightings he had yesterday while walking around a state park with Montana FWP staffers.

For the record, he has never been to Colorado or to peterburg (except maybe in his imagination).

I did have a talk with Peter today about making sure that he submits checklists from accurate locations and why that is important. He understands that he can use eBird to submit more sightings when supervised by me or Dad (and NOT by any of his close-in-age brothers, who find this all very funny).

On a side note I work with our Natural Heritage Program here, so I appreciate the work of eBird and the whole citizen science approach. However, when you've got an overzealous nine year-old in the mix, supervision is necessary.

Thanks, Sara G

Of course I sent an encouraging reply, asking Peter to keep on birding, using eBird, and ignoring those pesky big brothers. Sara's last note mentioned,

We went to the library yesterday and checked out a bunch of birding guides, as he's definitely interested and excited—a great hobby for him! We will be traveling to the Oregon coast for a few weeks this summer, and Peter is already talking about the birds he'll see there far from our Montana mountain home.

Another birder is born. When Peter is in high school, he'll start a birding club. He'll major in Biology and earn a Ph.D. in Ornithology. He'll be an enthusiastic teacher and inspire the next generation. Maybe his mom will remind him how it all started.

Peter's story reminded me of the joy I felt when I discovered birds and their world. Travel back in time to reminisce about how, when, and where the birding bug bit you. Were you nine? Was it in peterburg?

Purchasing your annual state parks pass

by Karen von Saltza

Some of us live near a Colorado State Park and this little chore does not present a problem. I live 10 minutes from Cherry Creek State Park so it is very easy for me to include the annual parks pass renewal on my list of daily or weekly chores.

But some of us live a considerable distance from a state park so renewing the annual pass requires some planning and perhaps a drive of 30–40 minutes. With our busy schedules this can become a minor annoyance, something none of us wish to associate with the pleasure we all derive from birding in our local preserves.

There is a solution, however. Most King Soopers offer state parks passes. These are kept locked up in a back office but all you need to do is ask for one at the service desk and pay the fee. The decal will be properly dated and registered so that you will be able to enjoy the pass immediately.

For further details click on the following link: (<http://cpw.state.co.us/buyapply/Pages/AnnualPassInfo.aspx>). Consider the time you did not have to drive to a distant location as some time freed up for you to bird.

Birders of all skill levels needed

DFO was contacted by Vanderbilt University seeking birders to participate in a research project. Their laboratory at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN is looking for birders of all levels of experience to participate in a project examining how perception and memory for birds differs between beginners and experts.

We really do mean all levels of experience, from the true beginner to the expert with decades of study, and everything in-between.

These experiments are online on the web. They measure your ability to remember and identify birds and sometimes other animals or objects. Many experiments are fairly short. They can be done on any computer, wherever and whenever you decide to do them.

One of our current experiments is a bird identification test. Go online and test your birding skills at <http://expertise.psy.vanderbilt.edu>.

Once you register your own login ID and password on the site and complete a short survey of your birding expertise, you will be able to participate in any experiments that are available. We expect to add new experiments over time. Some future experiments may include modest compensation.

If you have questions, please contact Professor Thomas Palmeri (thomas.j.palmeri@vanderbilt.edu) at Vanderbilt University.

**Thank you for your contribution to the
Research, Education, and Conservation
Grant Fund: Helen Barnhill, Jeane and Glenn
Hageman, Sarah Kreider/Gabriel Wiltse**

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

low Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles.

Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional.

Beginning birders are welcome.

Register online or contact leader.

**Belmar Historic Park
Saturday, August 20
7:30 AM - 10:30 AM**

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet in the parking lot near the lake. Belmar Historic Park is at 800 S Wadsworth Blvd in Lakewood.

From Alameda and Wadsworth go south on Wadsworth, turn west at the light on West Ohio Ave. Drive a short two blocks to the parking lot.

Bring snacks, water, and sunscreen for an easy walk around the ponds.

A good trip for beginners and accessible for persons with a disability.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Rueter-Hess Reservoir (Douglas Co.)

Sunday, August 21

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Mary Cay Burger (Email: mcburger3@juno.com Phone: 720-940-8394)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 16

Directions: Meet at Barr CCC Park, 18964 S Twenty Mile Rd, Parker, CO, located on the SW corner of Main St and 20 Mile Rd for birding there and later at the Rueter-Hess Reservoir, which is open to the public only with entry permission.

Guest Leader Tim Ryan of Parker Water Dept.

We will first bird at the Barr CCC Park in Parker, which is next to Cherry Creek, to check for riparian birds.

The next stop will be Rueter-Hess Reservoir, Parker Water Department's new reservoir not yet open to the public.

There we could see grassland species and waterfowl.

Bring binoculars, snacks, water, sunscreen, and a scope if possible.

Register online or contact leader.

Jackson Lake Reservoir

Saturday, August 27

7:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Bob Shade (Email: wrshade3@gmail.com Phone: 303-975-2476)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 18

Directions: Meet at Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right to carpool.

Continued on next page

70 members, guests enjoy picnicking, catching up, birding at Castlewood

by Tom Behnfield

The 2016 DFO Summer Picnic on June 11 was a smashing success with about 70 members and their guests. The weather cooperated; it was pretty hot but no rain. We were all grateful for the shade provided by the pavilions at Castlewood Canyon State Park.

There was plenty of birding to be had with a couple of groups going out before lunch, as well as at least one that took advantage of the premier location for several hours after the picnic in search of the elusive Black-and-white Warbler on the west side of the park (no!).

Bratwursts and veggie dogs were served, and the variety of potluck dishes that members brought was truly amazing! Salads, side dishes, and loads of great desserts, even Klondike ice cream bars packed in dry ice.

Everyone had a great time, and it was a terrific opportunity for folks to catch up with long-time friends and meet new ones. From the feedback I received, I can't think of any reason that we wouldn't want to repeat it for next year, and we are in the process of scouting locations.

Thanks to everyone who helped out with the event. Especially to Art Hudak for helping with shopping and transportation, Karen von Saltza for organizing birding at the park, grillmaster Peggy Salzer, and Debbie Behnfield for planning and moral support!

Photos of some of the attendees taken by Will Burt and Debbie Behnfield are shown below and on the next two pages.



Bill Turner, Rob Raker, Kevin Corwin, Buzz Schaumburg, Chuck Hundertmark, John Alden, Lark Latch, Sue Summers. *Will Burt*



Tom Behnfield, Lynn Willcockson. Will Burt



Susan Blansett. Debbie Behnfield

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is an all-day trip that will include Morgan County playas looking for shorebirds and fall migrant passerines.

So bring lunch, plenty of water, bug spray, and sunscreen. Scopes will be helpful.

We will combine into no more than 5 cars.

Register online or contact leader.

Prewitt and Jackson Reservoirs

Sunday, August 28

5:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Joey Kellner (Email: vireo1@comcast.net Phone: 303-978-1748)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Directions: Meet at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway to carpool.

Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

State Parks pass and Jumbo Res/Prewitt Res access permit required.

This is an all-day trip so bring snacks, lunch, plenty of water, sunscreen, long pants, and bug spray.

Register online or contact leader.

**— Scheduled by
Mary Cay Burger**



Greg Goodrich, Bill Wuerthele, Ruth Murayama, Pauline Ide, Mark Winfrey, Karen von Saltza, Jared del Russo, Chris Rurik.
Will Burt



Colleen Nunn, Liz Willcockson, Bobbi King, Will Burt, Rob Raker. *Will Burt*



Bob Shade, Patrick O'Driscoll, Art Hudak.
Debbie Behnfield

Denver Field Ornithologists

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FIELD TRIP SCHEDULERS

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Nominating	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org

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	Kay Niyo	admin@dfobirds.org
The Lark Bunting Editor	Kay Niyo	kay@kayniyo.com
The Lark Bunting Designer	Debbie Marshall, Marshall Publishing	marshallpublish@gmail.com

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COBirds	Internet bird-sighting discussion list	cobirds@googlegroups.com
DMNS Liaison	Jeff Stephenson	jstephenson@dmns.org
Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

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DFO logo by Radeaux

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome, new members: Helen Barnhill, Littleton; Kim Dufford, Denver; Robin Lindman, Highlands Ranch; Lewis Trescott, Broomfield; Larry Wiberg, Denver; Gabriel Wiltse, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Steve Jones

"Sandhills Serenade"

Aug. 22, 2016

Eric Eaton

"Beyond Birding:

Getting to Know

Insects"

Sept. 26, 2016

Kevin Cook

"200 Miles of Birding

in 200 Years"

Oct. 24, 2016

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| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26) | \$ | 10 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ | _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

When Did the Bug Bite?

All Levels of Birders Needed

Hot and Trending: DFO Picnic



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/SEPTEMBER 2016/VOL 52 NO 9

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://DFOBIRDS.ORG)

Field Trips

Chase Trip

Saturday, September 3
6:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Chris Rurik (Email: chrisrurik@gmail.com Phone: 253-225-7104)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway to carpool.

Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

Leader will be checking reports of rare birds in the area and planning an exciting route for the day.

Be sure to bring water, all the food you will need, a lunch you can eat in the car, and appropriate clothing.

Scopes will be useful and binoculars are necessary.

We will carpool from the CPW meeting place. **Register online or contact leader.**

Eldorado Canyon State Park

Sunday, September 4
6:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen Drozda (Email: drozforte@AOL.com Phone: 303-388-0891)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at the NE corner of the intersection of Highway 93 and 170. Carpool 3 miles west to the trailhead where parking is limited.

State Parks pass or day pass of \$8 is required.

Join us as we hail the migrants goodbye for another season.

Continued on page 2

Stewardship enables 'Sandhills Serenade'

On August 22, 2016, Steve Jones will provide DFO with a fascinating multimedia overview of the Nebraska Sandhills, well known as a stopover and breeding area for many birds.

Over the past 30 years, Steve has spent close to 500 nights camping out, mostly alone, in the Nebraska Sandhills.

The Nebraska Sandhills comprise the largest remaining expanse (20,000 mi.²) of native mixed-grass and tallgrass prairie in North America.

Under mostly private ownership by multi-generational ranching families, it's a place of wonder, where flocks of pelicans and curlews circle over thousands of lakes and ponds while Sharp-tailed Grouse perform their ritualistic dances on grassy dune tops.

It's also a place of immense solitude and optimism. Unlike most landscapes in the West, the Sandhills have been becoming "more natural" under the

Continued on page 4



Steve Jones. Steve Jones



Sandhill Crane launch, Platte River, Nebraska, 29 March 2013. Steve Jones

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

This is ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir habitat with steep canyon walls, and some great grassy meadows filled with chokecherry and current bushes.

Boulder County Open Space has performed fantastic habitat restoration in this area. This is a popular spot with rock climbers.

We can hope to see Yellow-breasted Chat, Lesser Goldfinch, White-throated Swift, Canyon Wren, all nuthatches, Spotted Towhee, and possibly the Lewis's Woodpecker that breeds in this area.

The trail is improved but there are a few rocky areas.

Bring the usual birding gear, sprays, clothing. We will eat lunch on the trail. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County) Sunday, September 11 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Bill Wuerthele (Email: wuerthel@ecentral.com
Phone: 303-333-2519)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir.

State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles.

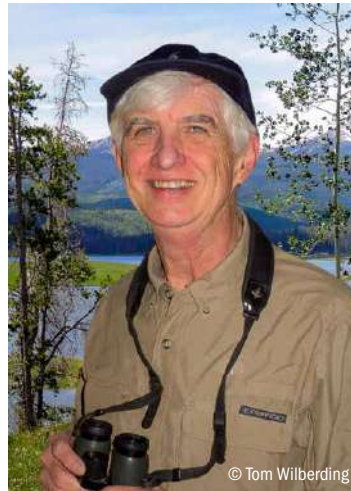
Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly.

Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional. Beginning birders are welcome.

Register online or contact leader.

Continued on next page

Let the record show: *Birds fly!*



From the President

Joe Roller

When a birder sees a mega-rarity, far from its usual haunts, it's only natural to exclaim, "How is that possible?"

An accurate reply, just a bit sarcastic, might be, "Birds fly!"

When someone reports a species new to Colorado, expect a variety of reactions: "Wow!", "Give us some details," "Impossible!", "That one's overdue in Colorado."

And my favorite, a common response to an "imaginative" birder, is "I. I. T." (Interesting if true).

So when an adult female Brown Booby was found and photographed by Peter Bandurian on June 22, 2016 along rushing, rocky Left Hand Creek near Boulder, it was natural that there were some naysayers.

"No way! So far from the ocean? Harrumph! Someone must have brought it here."

Who would that intrepid soul be, who carted a captive Brown Booby in the back of a Subaru, driving day and night, speeding toward the Boulder foothills, braving the squawks and the stench? A grand hoax? I don't think so. Maybe it was flown here. On Kiwi Airlines? No, that's reserved for New Zealand ratites.

Then there was the "wild origin" crowd, twitching from adrenaline, "Could it still be alive? Search Boulder Reservoir! Booby on the loose! Look upstream! It must have been headed that way."

It's quite plausible that the booby arrived here unassisted. After all, birds do fly, and there have been inland records of vagrant Brown Boobies from Nebraska, Iowa, Tennessee, and Arkansas (four years in a row).

Stories about Colorado's mega-rarities are fascinating. No one believed the birder who reported a Magnificent Frigatebird flying west over Lakewood on September 14, 1985.

"No way! What was she smoking?" But prepare to eat crow. That starving frigatebird dive-bombed a wind-surfer on Green Mountain Reservoir two days later. Was this a pterodactyl from Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*?

The frightened victim clubbed it to death with a paddle before tossing the carcass into a trash barrel. A savvy bystander retrieved it, and the specimen rests comfortably in a tray at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Necropsy report: no subcutaneous fat: starving, unable to practice its modus operandi—kleptoparasitism.

How do rarities reach the Centennial State? "Birds fly." But of course, not all birds fly. Consider the Gentoo Penguin, the Greater Rhea, and Inaccessible Island Rail. (That rail is said to be flightless, but no one can gain access to the island to prove it.)

But so far not one flightless bird has walked, waddled, or swum into Colo-

Continued on page 3



Brown Booby, Left Hand Canyon, Boulder Co., 22 June 2016. *Peter Bandurian*

PRESIDENT, continued from page 2

rado, at least not that anyone has noticed. Every one of Colorado's 499 bird species is capable of flight.

Who is responsible for investigating the evidence, pro and con, that a species merits inclusion on our state's official checklist? Who keeps the list "clean," free of short-termers like Monk Parakeet and birds possibly assisted by a cage-bird fancier (Rufous-collared Sparrow) or an aviculturist (Baikal Teal)?

Who decides? The Colorado Bird Records Committee (CBRC) does, with its experienced, sagacious, and careful members of the Colorado Field Ornithologists.

One might not always agree with them, but who better to do that work? They are not just flipping coins, but using their combined knowledge and the latest scientific techniques. Stable isotope analysis nixed Colorado's taxidermy specimen of an Emperor Goose.

DNA analysis is also available for knotty problems. When an odd-looking plover showed up at Lower Latham years ago, national experts were divided as to the ID.

Could it have been a Pacific Golden-Plover, a new species for Colorado? After mitochondrial DNA analysis of a shed feather showed that the bird's mother was an American Golden-Plover, there seemed to be no need for the CBRC to review the report.

Report or record? There is a difference. A *report* kicks off the process that leads to either an accepted or nonaccepted *record*.

Take Colorado's four records of Long-billed Thrasher. How could those sedentary, stub-winged mimic thrushes get to Colorado? They flew.

Gulls are strong flyers, but come on! A Kelp Gull from the Southern Hemi-

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Bluff Lake Nature Center Saturday, September 17 7:30 AM - 11:00 AM

A.J. Gest (Email: offsetaj@comcast.net Phone: 303-994-2420)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: From I-70 East, go south on Havana Street and left onto E 29th Dr, which then joins Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.

Continue on Martin Luther King Jr Blvd to Bluff Lake Nature Center in the park on left side.

Bluff Lake, gem of the Denver parks. This nature area offers a great range of habitat: wetland, yucca, and large cottonwoods.

This attracts a variety of raptors, waterfowl, and songbirds.

Portable toilets are on site but no potable water. Paths are easy walking trails. We'll be walking 1 to 1.5 miles.

Bring plenty of water, sunscreen. Scopes are optional.

Register online or contact leader.

Banner Lakes SWA (Weld County)

Sunday, September 18 7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Mark Amershek (Email: mamershek@msn.com Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the wildlife area for a half-day trip. Take I-76 east; at the Hudson exit (exit 31), go four miles east on CO 52.

The main parking lot is on the left (north) just past CR 53 (Delorme 31 D6).

Trip coleader: Bruce Neuman.

We will bird both the north and south sides of the area. There are numerous small to medium

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

sized ponds, many ringed with marshes, Russian olives, and junipers.

There will be moderate on- and off-trail hiking of about 2-3 miles. Scopes would be helpful but not necessary.

Potential for a hawk/owl search of the DIA loop in the afternoon.

Possible lunch opportunity in Hudson. **Register online or contact leader.**

South Platte Park and Carson Nature Center

Saturday, September 24

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Gregg Goodrich (Email: GreggGoodrich@gmail.com
Phone: 303-655-9135)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at Carson Nature Center, north of Mineral Ave, 1 block west of S Santa Fe Drive.

The South Platte River holds a variety of migrating waterfowl: Green-winged Teal, Hooded Merganser, Mallard, and Canada Goose.

We should find shorebirds in the lakes south of Mineral. Eared Grebes have also been seen there. Raptors and Great Horned Owls are regulars.

Bring water, binoculars, a scope if you have one. **Register online or contact leader.**

— Scheduled by Mary Geder



American Avocet pair, Crescent Lake NWR, Nebraska, 21 May 2007. Steve Jones

SANDHILLS, continued from page 1

careful stewardship of ranching families and wildlife refuges managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

During the past six years, Steve has focused on recording natural sounds of the Sandhills, including the voices of migrating cranes, dancing prairie-chickens, singing ovenbirds and redstarts, rumbling thunderstorms, and nesting owls.

His multimedia presentation matches vibrant images of the Sandhills throughout the seasons with these natural sounds. Signed copies of his new CD, *Sandhills Serenade*, and his book, *The Last Prairie*, will be available for purchase after the presentation.

Steve Jones is author of *The Last Prairie*, *A Sandhills Journal*, and *Owls of Boulder County*, and co-author of *The Shortgrass Prairie*, the *Peterson Field Guide to the North American Prairie*, *Colorado Nature Almanac*, *Wild Boulder County*, and *Butterflies of the Colorado Front Range*.

Continued on page 5

PRESIDENT, continued from page 3

sphere—in Morgan County? It had flown. Brambling? Streak-backed Oriole? Sooty and Sandwich Terns? Flyers all, each carefully researched, approved, and added to the official Colorado list by the CBRC.

So it's OK to be skeptical about a bird that is way off course. But don't dismiss it out of hand. Get more details. Grab a photo or scribble a drawing. Make a sound recording. Find a second observer. Pick up a fallen feather!

But don't say, "*No way!*"

There could have been "*a way.*"

As we know, "*Birds fly!*"

SANDHILLS, continued from page 4

As a regional coordinator and technical consultant for the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas project, he wrote 21 species accounts.

His consulting work includes more than three-dozen breeding bird and resource inventories for city, county, and state open space programs.

He has led field trips and taught nature classes for 35 years, and he taught in the Boulder Valley Public Schools for 33 years.

He received his Masters degree in U.S. social and environmental history from Boston University.

The DFO meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Ricketson Auditorium.

Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the

guard that you are there for the DFO meeting.



Niobrara NWR, Nebraska, 15 June 2015. Steve Jones



Passing storm rainbow, Crescent Lake NWR, Nebraska, 13 June 2011. Steve Jones

Fall Bird Count 2016

Birders in metro Denver have participated in Fall Bird Counts for many years and they are a lot of fun. Participation is encouraged. The event is no longer sponsored by DFO. No fees, but some sites require a state parks pass or pre-registration. Bring binoculars, scopes for the reservoir counts, field guide, and lunch. Everyone welcome to help—more eyes see more birds.

Friday, Sept. 9

Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leaders: Mary Cay Burger, 720-940-8394 (mcburger3@juno.com)

Meet at 7 a.m. at Marina, inside west gate near Cherry Creek High School. State Parks pass required.

Barr Lake periphery

Leader: Dick Anderson, 303-757-4582 (rholesanderson@earthlink.net)

Meet at 7 a.m. at Barr Lake Entrance Station.

This trip, mostly driving, does not involve much walking and will be good for people with limited mobility or stamina. Phone leader or email him.

Saturday, Sept. 10

Lower Bear Creek & Marston Reservoir

Leader: Keith Hidalgo, 720-201-0195 (hidalgo@yahoo.com)

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Wal-Mart at the SE quadrant of C470 & Bowles (south side, south of the Garden Center). We will bird Bear Creek Lake Park and the Bear Creek Greenbelt in the morning and Marston Reservoir in the afternoon.

Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Amy Morton, 720-570-6146 (amylmorton@yahoo.com)

Call leader if you plan to go. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at RMBO, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane. South off Bromley Lane from I-76, first road east of railroad track.

Lots of walking—at least five miles—on all sides of the lake, including the banding station. State Parks pass required.

Waterton, downstream

Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery, 303-814-2723 (ouzel@aol.com)

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Audubon Nature Center (left turn immediately after turning onto Waterton/Roxborough road and before the DOW parking lot for Waterton Canyon).

A 4–5 mile hike. Wear long pants due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed.

Chatfield State Park

Leader, Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at swim beach (near the main entrance off of Wadsworth). State Parks Pass required.

Sunday Sept. 11

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Leader: Tom Halverstadt, 303-618-6730 (thavsl@comcast.net)

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Homestead Parking Lot. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance. State Parks pass required.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-641-8823

Call leader to sign up; spaces available.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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The Lark Bunting

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Welcome, new members: Michelle McKim, Fort Collins; Jackie Nelsen, Centennial; Donna Parker, Denver; Mark Winfrey, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

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Aug. 22, 2016

Eric Eaton

“Beyond Birding:

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Insects”

Sept. 26, 2016

Kevin Cook

“200 Miles of Birding

in 200 Years”

Oct. 24, 2016

John Drummond

“Birding in Cuba” Nov. 28, 2016

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| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ | 40 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26) | \$ | 10 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ | _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

Sandhills Serenade

Birds Fly!

Fall Bird Count



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/OCTOBER 2016/VOL 52 NO 10

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://dfobirds.org)

Field Trips

Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat/Sawhill (Boulder County) Saturday, October 1 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Chuck Hundertmark (Email: chundertmark8@gmail.com
Phone: 303-604-0531)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: From northbound U.S. 36, take Foothill Parkway exit. Go north 2 miles to Arapahoe Ave, then east to 75th St.

Go north on 75th St past Valmont Rd and railroad tracks. Turn left at Wildlife Habitat sign. Follow road west and south to Cottonwood Marsh parking lot.

The trip will involve walking 1-2 miles on level ground. Bring binoculars, snack, and water. We will look at waterfowl at the lakes at Walden and Sawhill Open Space areas, so bring a scope if you have one.

We will also look for late migrants and early winter arrivals. **Register online or contact leader.**

Belmar Historic Park Sunday, October 2 7:15 AM - 12:00 PM

Ira Sanders & Tammy Sanders (Email: zroadrunner14@gmail.com Phone: 303-278-7172)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet in the parking lot near the lake. Belmar Historic Park is at 800 S Wadsworth Blvd in Lakewood.

From Alameda and Wadsworth go south on Wadsworth, turn west at the light on West Ohio Ave. Drive a short two blocks to the

Continued on page 2

Beyond birding: the joys of bugwatching



Eric Eaton. Jeffrey Gordon

Arrive early, DFO will meet at the Denver Zoo!

Due to a DMNS scheduling conflict, the September 26 DFO meeting has been moved to the Denver Zoo.

Join DFO at 6:30 p.m. for a social hour with snacks in Norgren Hall at the Denver Zoo prior to the program. Park in the Denver Zoo surface and underground parking facility.

Prepare to be entertained and informed by Eric Eaton's introduction to Colorado "bugwatching" at the DFO meeting on September 26.

Eric assures us that we will become hooked on insects, and eagerly welcomed by the friendly entomological community.

Insects are wildlife, too. The average person may consider them to be pests, but "bugs" have increasing value as observable nongame wildlife, akin to birding. Insects have many attributes to recommend them as organisms to pursue with magnifier, notebook, camera, and digital devices.

Their diversity, beauty, fascinating behaviors, and close proximity (your backyard or even basement will have its own fauna) make insects worthy of more than a passing glance. Sure, they offer their own set of challenges; but the rewards, both personal to the observer and collective in terms of scientific knowledge, far exceed those gained even from birding.

Unless a given insect has economic impact, positive or negative, chances are we know next to nothing about it. Predator-prey relationships and host

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IO (eye-oh) Moth, Colorado. Eric Eaton



Male "tarantula hawk" wasp, Colorado. Eric Eaton

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

parking lot. Half-day trip. Bring snacks, water, and sunscreen for an easy walk around the park.

A good trip for beginners and accessible for persons with a disability. **Register online or contact leader.**

Chatfield State Park

Tuesday, October 4

7:00 AM - 1:00 PM

David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at swim beach by entering west entrance of park off S Wadsworth, 1.5 miles south of C-470. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Expect a selection of migrants and residents in riparian, shrublands and open habitats, and possible rare shorebirds or waterbirds.

Bring snack, water, and scopes. Mostly easy walking with some time on trails.

We may go directly from our meeting spot to begin birding at the Marina Sandspit. **Register online or contact leader.**

Catamount Trail (Green Mountain Trail to Catamount Reservoir)

Saturday, October 8

6:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Chris Gilbert (Email: chrisgee9@gmail.com Phone: 804-214-1508)

Trail Difficulty: Strenuous

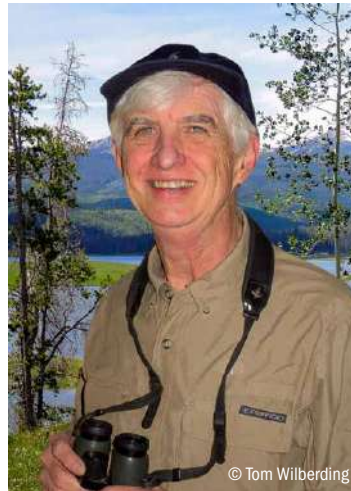
Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: To carpool, meet at the King Soopers parking lot at 100 Founders Parkway (just east of I-25) in Castle Rock, CO.

We will meet and carpool to Green Mountain Falls, CO (about an hour drive from the meeting

Continued on next page

Board polishes DFO's shiny apple



From the President

Joe Roller

djian, who moved here from California two years ago, as interim director to fill a vacancy. For decades he was a leader of the Santa Clara Bird Club. David is bringing fresh ideas to DFO and leading field trips this fall, so please welcome him.

Many of you responded to the summer survey that Director Susan Blansett wrote, managed, and analyzed. To those who responded, *thank you!* In this very issue of *The Lark Bunting* Susan summarizes certain survey statistics, and some say that when the sun shines she assists Sally as she sells seashells from the seafloor by the seashore.

In her article Susan describes ways that directors have already started working on some of your excellent ideas. But wait! There's more!

Now that we have collected and studied the survey results, the DFO Board will hold a retreat, an all-day meeting on Saturday 15 October at the Old Stone House at Barr Lake. That historic edifice is an office of Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (BCR), which has generously opened it for us; the retreat will not cost DFO a dime.

Our aim is for the board to have an entire day to look beyond our usual duties and explore the "Big Picture." We'll be free to brainstorm, find solutions to problems, and plan for the future. Might we dare to think outside the proverbial six-sided cardboard container?

Susan organized the retreat, and long-time DFO member Larry Modesitt will be our moderator. As you may know, Larry now serves as BCR Board Chair and has experience facilitating similar retreats.

The theme of the retreat is "Growth." How can we continue to improve, add members, add value, and continue to polish our shiny apple?

Membership has grown to an all-time high of 444! DFO is stronger because you members support all we offer: quality evening programs, a nifty website, *The Lark Bunting*, and frequent field trips, free and open to the public.

What lies ahead for our growing organization? Stay tuned!



Blowout Tiger Beetle, Colorado. Eric Eaton

plants are known for only a fraction of the approximately 90,000 insect species occurring in North America north of Mexico.

The knowledge of geographic distribution for each species is even more fragmentary. The average person looking for insects regularly is almost guaranteed to produce county records, if not state records, or discovery of a new species.

Tools for observing insects, and resources for identifying them, are now more plentiful than ever,

available in a variety of media. Yes, the learning curve can be steep given the “obstacles” of camouflage, mimicry, sexual dimorphism, and metamorphosis that insects present, but those hurdles can be overcome with persistence, and help from entomologists who are now more accessible than ever before.

Eric R. Eaton is the author of the *Kaufman Field Guide to Insects of North America*. He will have some books for sale at the meeting.

The DFO meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in Norgren Hall at the Denver Zoo. Come early and enjoy a DFO social hour with snacks at 6:30. Plenty of parking in the Denver Zoo parking lot and underground.

DFO adds weekday field trips

by Karen von Saltza

David Suddjian, well known to any of you who read the rare bird postings, has volunteered to lead mid-week field trips starting in October 2016.

You will notice that he has two trips scheduled on the October agenda, one at Chatfield and the other, an all day excursion, to visit the Park County Reservoirs.

For those of you who can participate in a week-day field trip, I encourage you to take advantage of David's years of leading field trips for the Santa Cruz, CA bird club. He is a great addition to DFO and to our field trip program.

Thank you for your contribution to the Research, Education, and Conservation Grant Fund: Jeane and Glenn Hageman, Matthew Brown and Beth Montgomery, Bobbi Vollmer, Cindy Sue Wilson

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

spot). The hike will be a 6-mile round trip hike with some elevation gain via switchbacks at the start.

We will see some waterfalls and great scenery. We should see many of the typical mountain birds like Steller's Jays and Evening Grosbeaks.

Bring snacks, plenty of water, and a sack lunch; be weather savvy and ready. We will eat lunch up at the reservoir.

Binoculars a must. Cameras are encouraged. Scopes are welcomed but not necessary (you'll have to carry it 6 miles if you bring it). **Register online or contact leader.**

Genesee Park (Denver Mountain Parks)

**Saturday, October 8
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Sue Summers & Wendy Wibbens (Email: summerssue@hotmail.com Phone: 253-678-3721)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the Stegosaurus parking lot just south of I-70, exit 259.

Drive under the freeway to the second left turn. The parking lot is at the base of the Hogback, near the Hawk Watch location.

Enjoy an autumn walk in a beautiful ponderosa woodlands. Typical birds such as nuthatches, Townsend's Solitaire, Steller's Jay, and Red Crossbill plus late fall migrants are possible.

Relaxed pace, unpaved trails, restrooms available. Bring binoculars and plenty of water and snacks, hiking boots are advisable. **Register online or contact leaders.**

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Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Chatfield State Park, The Big Sit Sunday, October 9 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM

Edmund J Holub (Email:
edmund.holub@gmail.com
Phone: 303-979-2194)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From the Wadsworth Blvd entrance, go past the pay station to the stop sign, turn right at this 'T' and continue around the reservoir.

Cross the S Platte River and continue up the hill. Turn left at the sign for the park headquarters and make a hard left into the large parking lot labeled Heronry Overlook.

At the far right corner, a trail leads down to the Heron Overlook. State Parks pass or day pass required.

The Big Sit, an international birding event, has exacting, loose, and frivolous standards. Big Sitters count all the birds they see or hear from within a circle with a 17-foot diameter.

Count sitters may send out scouts and beaters to find other birds and identify them as long as a Sitter sees the bird from within the circle.

All around the world, on this date, people will Big Sit! Come and join Ed Holub and other recruits any time from (before) dawn to (after) dusk.

Stay for an hour, a morning, or all day. Drop by whenever you like.

Every year an hourly chart is maintained of the birds that Sitters see from the circle. In the past few years Joe Kellner has tallied 55–65 species.

Bring chairs, breakfast, lunch, dinner, picnics, coffee, etc. Bring binoculars, scopes, and field guides.

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Members and nonmembers give DFO a piece of their mind. Thank you!

by Susan Blansett

To all you DFO members (and some nonmembers) who took the time to respond to DFO's online survey in July: THANK YOU for giving us a good piece of your mind!

This was the first time DFO had polled its members so extensively, and the first time we've polled nonmembers—and boy, did we learn a lot! Here is a summary of the results, and how we are using what we've learned.

Why the survey? In our quest to grow and improve DFO, we realized we didn't really know how people felt about the organization, other than the fact that our membership is loyal and growing.

So the survey was designed to learn what members value, what you want more or less of, and what we might do to attract new members and revenue.

Who we polled, and response rate. Separate surveys were sent to members and nonmembers. We polled all 434 DFO members and 353 nonmembers (people who had shared their emails with us to attend field trips).

The response rate was terrific—42% of our members and 12% of the folks on our nonmembers list gave us their assessments and ideas. We now have actionable information and baseline data from which to evaluate DFO's performance over time.

Top 10 things we learned from DFO members. Just some highlights.

1. DFO's field trips were overwhelmingly rated "Excellent" or "Good" for ease of registration, trip leaders, and overall quality, while 53% of respondents have found that some trips were full when they tried to sign up.
2. Our monthly meetings likewise received superlative marks for speaker quality, fellowship opportunities, and DMNS facilities. By far the favored program topics are related to bird identification, bird songs, or conservation of species and habitat.
3. High marks are given the DFO website (57% rated it "great") and *The Lark Bunting* (68% read nearly every issue). In fact, DFO's communications channels and frequency satisfy 94% of respondents!
4. The DFO Facebook page is used heavily by a small portion of our members and is widely seen as a feature that may help us attract younger birders.
5. The #1 way in which members said DFO could add value is through more field trips, including overnight, family, or member-only trips.
6. Nearly 44% of respondents said they'd be willing to get more engaged with DFO where they can bring time or talent.
7. About half of respondents expressed positive opinions about DFO establishing closer relationships with CO Parks & Wildlife and other habitat and wildlife-oriented groups.
8. Another 20% of respondents said they'd be willing to donate money to our operations or the Research, Education, and Conservation Fund, and more indicated they would like to when resources permit.

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9. Even though members want to grow our ranks especially among youth and younger adults, 94% of our current members said they DON'T know anyone to recruit from those age groups.

10. DFO members expressed opinions in a variety of "short answer" questions, giving us more specifics and some great ideas!

Top 5 things we learned from nonmembers.

1. 49% of our nonmember respondents have actually been DFO members in the past.

2. 42% said they're more likely to join DFO after taking the survey than they were before.

3. Sometimes newcomers and nonmembers feel awkward and not especially welcome at our monthly meetings.

4. More field trips targeted at younger people and families with kids would appeal and might help us grow our membership.

5. Nonmember and member responses were similar on most topics.

How we are using the information. Two great things about DFO are how vocal and engaged our members are, and how committed everyone on the Board is to delivering value to them.

Board members jumped in and started making improvements right away. Check it out:

1. You asked to make evening programs available online. Our programs are now being videotaped! (See Historian Kris Haglund's article in this issue of *The Lark Bunting* for details.)

2. You asked to volunteer! DFO is doing more all the time to add value, so Director Tom Behnfield will be matching volunteers with Board committees and other needs to spread the work.

3. You asked for access to our bird checklists. Our web designer, Ann Johnson, and Mary Driscoll, Karen von Saltza, and Kay Niyo have now made DFO's eBird field-trip sightings viewable on our website.

Just go to <http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/BirdReports.aspx>, click on the links, and use Ann's short videos for help if needed.

(See Chuck Hundertmark's article in this issue of *The Lark Bunting* for details.)

4. You asked that new members and visitors be welcomed. I established a new "Welcome Team" approach at each monthly meeting, so Mary Cay Burger and I can help newcomers and guests feel more at home and encourage them to come back or even join.

5. And finally, you confirmed the goal of recruiting youth and younger adults to DFO's ranks.

Our Board Retreat in October will focus a lot of discussion and creative thought on how we can grow DFO and enhance its value to members using all this new information!

Curious? Check out the results yourself! Unfortunately, we can't provide links to the actual results, as it could expose personal respondent information.

But you can view PDF files of the member and nonmember survey responses at <http://dfobirds.org/Members/OtherReports.aspx>.

Field Trips

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Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, October 9

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP. From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles.

Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Chico Basin Ranch

Sunday, October 16

6:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Mark Amershek (Email: mamershek@msn.com Phone: 303-329-8646)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: To carpool, meet at the King Soopers parking lot at 100 Founders Parkway (just east of I-25) in Castle Rock, CO.

One-day birding pass for Chico Basin Ranch is \$15 or \$10/individual when with a DFO group. This is a fee area.

We need volunteers with high clearance vehicles to drive on ranch roads. Let leader know if you can drive.

Chico Basin Ranch is a working cattle ranch located in El Paso/Pueblo counties, southeast of Colorado Springs. The driving distance from Castle Rock will be

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Field Trips

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approximately 100 miles, a little over two hours.

The ranch will be birded by following the ranch roads in vehicles with stops to bird on level open areas such as ponds, wetlands, and grasslands.

This will be an all-day trip so please bring water and lunch. Scopes will be handy but not necessary. A two-way radio per car would be helpful.

We will bird until 4 pm and should be back at Castle Rock around 6 p.m. **Register online or contact leader.**

Bluff Lake Nature Center

Sunday, October 16

7:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Pratyaydipta Rudra & Sreemala Das Majumder (Email: pratyayr@gmail.com Phone: 919-699-4043)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: From I-70 East, go south on Havana Street and left onto E 29th Dr, which then joins Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.

Continue on Martin Luther King Jr Blvd to Bluff Lake Nature Center in the park on left side.

Prat and Pooja are new DFO leaders who have been very active on DFO field trips since they moved to Denver a year ago. Please welcome them.

Bluff Lake offers a great range of habitat: wetland, yucca, and large cottonwoods. This attracts a variety of raptors and songbirds. We will be looking for potential fall migrants, potential shorebirds and waterfowls.

Portable toilets are on site but no potable water. We'll be walking on level trails up to 3 miles. However, there is a 40 step stair (approx) before the start of the walk.

Bring plenty of water, sunscreen. Scopes are optional (please bring

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Robert Spencer named DFO Life Member

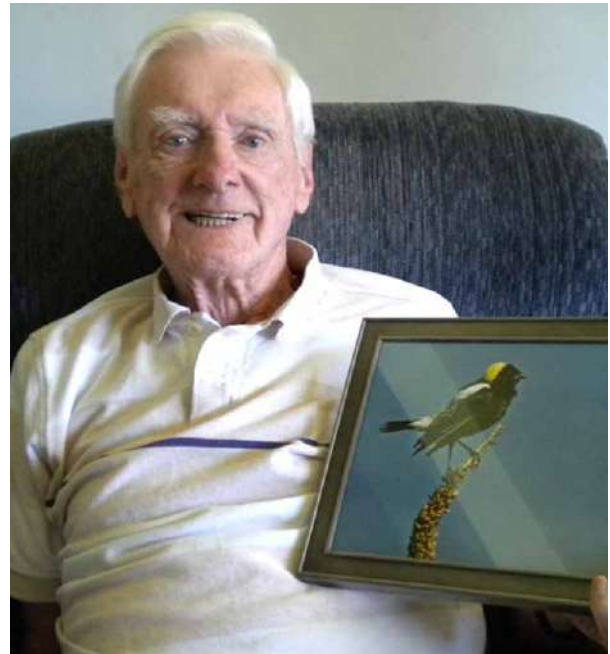
by Mary Cay Burger

At the May 2016 DFO Board meeting, a motion was passed to make Bob Spencer a DFO Life Member.

Bob joined in 1963, 43 years ago, and is still out birding whenever possible.

Spencer served the DFO as vice president for two terms and president for two terms.

He was a board director for another two years, and a field trip coordinator for over ten years.



Bob Spencer. Susan Blansett

As a frequent trip leader and participant in Spring, Fall, and Christmas Bird Counts, Spencer's contributions are exemplary.

He was awarded the Ptarmigan Award in 1995. At the August meeting, DFO presented Bob with a Bobolink photograph donated by Bill Schmoker.

Ever missed a DFO program or wanted to see one again? Recordings available

by Kris Haglund

DFO is pleased to offer a new benefit to its members.

Thanks to the Denver Museum of Nature & Science and its events staff, we are now able to record presentations made at DFO meetings and make those recordings available through the [dfobirds.org](http://dfobirds.org/Programs/Past.aspx) website at <http://dfobirds.org/Programs/Past.aspx>.

The target audience for these recordings is those individuals who may miss a program or those who may want to see a program again at a later date.

Our first test recording, which covers the entire March 28, 2016 DFO meeting, is already on the website.

Beginning with the September 26, 2016 meeting, we will record only the featured presentation and the Q&A session.

While speakers can opt out of being recorded, we hope that we will be able to capture most, if not all, presentations.

All feedback is welcomed by DFO Historian Kris Haglund, kris.haglund@dmns.org, 303-370-6360.



Ptarmigan Awardee Ed Holub and DFO President Joe Roller. *Will Burt*

Ptarmigan Award presented to Ed Holub

by Kayleen A. Niyo and Joe Roller

The prestigious Ptarmigan Award for “outstanding, loyal, and meritorious service to the DFO and the advancement of bird study in Colorado” was presented to long-time DFO member Ed Holub at the DFO meeting on August 22, 2016, as his extended family watched proudly.

The Ptarmigan Award is presented to a DFO member who has voluntarily provided time and extra service for the benefit of DFO. It was initiated in 1988 and in the past 28 years has been awarded to 24 DFO members.

Raised in Texas, Ed became so intrigued by birds and art that he would purchase bird stamps at the local drugstore and then replicate the bird paintings.

A junior high field trip to Aransas NWR on the gulf coast sparked Ed’s love of birds and the outdoors. To this day birds and art have remained his passions.

An active retiree, Ed bikes a thousand miles each summer, tends beautiful flower gardens, hikes to enjoy the natural world and birds, and still sends out hand-painted Christmas cards.

Ed has served DFO tirelessly in many ways. For years, he toted bird books and magazines to every DFO meeting for members. He continues to serve as a frequent and popular DFO field trip leader and as a Christmas Bird Count leader every year. He also leads groups for the Denver spring and fall bird counts and continues to inspire new birders on every trip. As his son David explained, “Ed has made the lives of those around him better.”

DFO is pleased to present the 2016 DFO Ptarmigan Award to Ed Holub.

Field Trips

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if you have one). **Register online or contact leader.**

**Prospect Park
(Wheat Ridge Greenbelt)
Saturday, October 22
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue.

Go one mile west. Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

This is a trip with easy walking and accessible for mobility impaired individuals. Bring water and a snack; lunch optional. Good trip for novice birders and new members. **Register online or contact leader.**

**South Platte River Trail at E
88th Ave and I-76
Sunday, October 23
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Paul Slingsby (Email: paslingsby@comcast.net Phone: 303-422-3728)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the parking area at 88th Ave and South Platte River Trail. From I-76 take E 88th Ave exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles, then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead.

We will see plenty of ducks, a few raptors, and some hardy winter residents. Hike along paved trail and occasionally in the adjacent mud for up to three miles. **Register online or contact leader.**

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Field Trips

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Park County Reservoirs

Tuesday, October 25

5:45 AM - 3:00 PM

David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at RTD Park-n-Ride at C-470 and University Blvd. Exit C-470 and drive one block south to Dad Clark Drive.

Turn right (west) to the parking lot entrance on the west perimeter. The group will meet in the southeast corner of the lot easily visible from the road.

We'll visit some of the large and small bodies of water in South Park probably including Lake George, Eleven Mile Reservoir, Spinney Mountain Reservoir, Tarryall Reservoir, and others.

Plan to see migrant waterbirds and a chance for scoters, loons, Long-tailed Duck, also raptors, and birds of ponderosa pine forest with possible Northern Pygmy Owl and Red Crossbill.

Car caravan between sites with limited walking. State Parks pass required for some reservoirs.

Bring lunch and drinks, scopes, and dress in layers. The route will lend itself to returning to the Denver area via Highway 285.

Register online or contact leader.

Cherry Creek State Park

(Arapahoe County)

Saturday, October 29

7:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Mary Cay Burger (Email: mc-burger3@juno.com Phone: 720-940-8394)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the west marina parking lot. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Coleader Bob Righter, author

Continued on next page

New web feature: DFO eBird reports

by Chuck Hundertmark, Past President

A dynamic website is one that keeps you coming back, and the DFO website is such a site.

If you don't check the DFO site regularly, you'll likely miss something new. And most of the new stuff is a response to your requests.

Before DFO began entering field trip data in eBird (in 2011 and access to some data back to 2009), we published costly monthly field trip summary PDFs in *The Lark Bunting*, which did not provide data comparisons over time.

Since we began using the website for field trips, you have been able to see individual location eBird checklists for past trips.

But the DFO Board, Field Trip Committee, and web administrator never lost sight of members' desire to have more usable field trip report data.

The amazing new <http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/BirdReports.aspx> offers that and more. Ann Johnson, website designer who works the magic on the DFO website, has provided seven new ways to slice and dice DFO's field trip data.

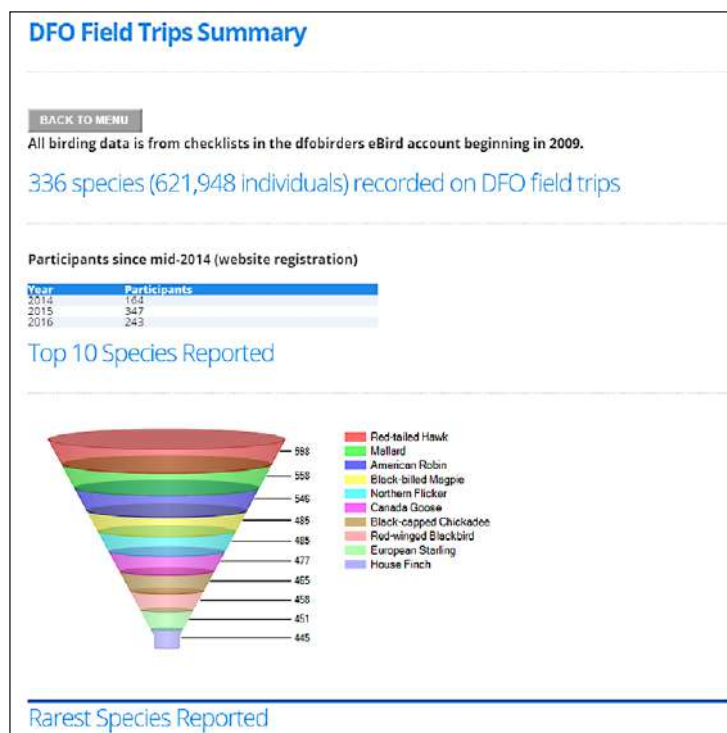
The data are dynamic. Every new eBird list entered adds to the data.

The [summary page](#) lets you explore the top 10 species or the rarest species seen on DFO trips in the last seven years.

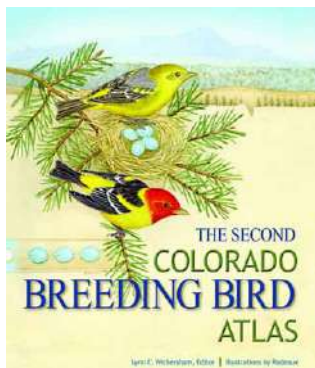
The [Monthly Field Trips](#) link delivers two pull down menus to select a year and month. You can compare all the species seen on trips for that month much like the old PDFs provided.

You can explore [species by month](#) seen or [by field trip](#). These can be useful if you want to search out particular species for your year or county list. Still missing loons for this year? November might not be a bad month to search.

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Second Colorado BBA goes to press



by Lynn E. Wickersham, Editor

The Colorado Bird Atlas Partnership and Colorado Parks and Wildlife initiated the state's second Breeding Bird Atlas in 2007; field work continued through 2012.

Now, *The Second Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas* book is in press after four years of preparation.

This ~750-page book follows in the footsteps of the first atlas published in 1998, *Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas* (H. E. Kingery, Ed.).

These atlases document current distribution, habitat use, and breeding phenology of Colorado's breeding birds as well as changes in species distribution across a 20-year interval.

The second atlas includes detailed accounts for 262 species, and short accounts for about a dozen more, with full color maps, graphs, and illustrations by Colorado-based artist Radeaux.

At this time, *The Second Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas* is in the final stages of editing and layout, in preparation for printing.

The co-publishers seek to procure as many pre-orders as possible and implement a mass distribution upon the book's launch. Pre-orders will guide the print run and ensure coverage of the many costs of publication.

Likely, the publishers will print only slightly more books than the number of pre-orders received; thus, few copies may be available after the initial distribution. Proceeds from the sale of the book will go directly towards publication costs, with any amount leftover saved for the initiation of Atlas III (in 2027).

Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO) is a financial Sponsor for the Atlas. Numerous DFO members participated in data collection over the six years of field work.

Some DFO members also authored one or more of the 262 species accounts featured in the Atlas II book.

DFO members can provide additional support for continued breeding bird atlases in Colorado and in turn, long-term bird conservation, by purchasing *The Second Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas*.

Please visit <http://www.cobreedingbirdatlasii.org/> to view partial results of the Atlas and **pre-order your book today!**

NEW WEB FEATURE, *continued from page 8*

For help in understanding the various reports, watch the short video tutorials by clicking on the video icon beside each report title. Explore for yourself and enjoy!

Next month, we will explore some more ways to use the data. Stay tuned!

Not all improvements to the DFO website relate to field trips, but many do. That's thanks to the excellent coordination between Field Trip Director Karen von Saltza, DFO eBird Account Administrator Mary Driscoll, Web Administrator Kay Niyo, and prestidigitator Ann Johnson.

Field Trips

Continued from page 8

and historian. Look for gulls, waterfowl, and a variety of birds. Habitats include deep water, marshlands, mixed grasses, and cottonwoods.

We will carpool to the various stops and walk 1–2 miles. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, and sunscreen. Scopes are useful.

Register online or contact leader.

Denver City Park (Denver County)

**Sunday, October 30
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Patrick O'Driscoll & Karen Drozda (Email: patodrisk@gmail.com
Phone: 303-837-0864)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the parking strip southeast of 22nd Ave just north of Ferril Lake.

From Colorado Blvd, turn west onto 22nd Ave and go past the Museum of Nature and Science. Turn left just before the zoo at the sign to the Pavilion Bandstand. Park on the left at the end of the parking area closest to Ferril Lake.

Halfway through autumn, expect the unexpected in this urban oasis. We could see 10 or more duck species on Ferril and Duck lakes. We'll check Canada Geese flocks for cacklings and uncommon migrants and scan the water for unusual guests (Black and Surf Scoters 3 years ago).

We'll also walk the park groves and gardens for year round locals, migrants, and early winter arrivals: juncos, Townsend's Solitaire, nuthatches, Brown Creepers.

Bring water, snacks, binoculars, and camera. Scopes are helpful on Ferril Lake. **Register online or contact leader.**

**—Scheduled by
Karen von Saltza**

Last Month's Program: Sandhills Serenade

Tim Johnson

Nearly 130 people turned out Monday, August 22, for the first DFO meeting of Fall 2016.

Stephen R. Jones is a naturalist who has been deeply involved with the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas project, and has done consulting work for city, county, and state open space programs.

He taught for many years in the Boulder Valley School system and has authored several books.

Steve presented a visually and aurally stunning program celebrating the Nebraska Sandhills area entitled "Sandhills Serenade," with sometimes lyrical narration concerning specific areas.

The natural sounds accompanying the program are currently available on CD through the Boulder County Nature Association.

Which brings me to a conundrum. I cannot do justice to such an elegant, aesthetically centered, mostly non-verbal program, other than urge people to read his book and listen to the CD.

I was entranced by Steve's presentation and my notes, handwritten in the dark, suggest the wanderings of a drunken potato beetle. Data concerning Steve and the Sandhills were well presented in the September *Lark Bunting* http://dfobirds.org/LarkBunting/Archives/2010-2019/2016/09_Sep_2016_LB.pdf.

Steve began with photos of his avowed favorite road in the Sandhills from the Garden County seat Oshkosh through the Crescent Lake NWR.

I heard sounds of Northern Bobwhite, Wild Turkey, and Common Yellowthroat.

In the same region are the town of

Lewellen and the Clear Creek State Waterfowl Management Area along the North Platte River, meccas for Sandhill Cranes.

Steve mentioned a mysterious, high-quality birding location termed the Lewellen Bridge and recommended the Gander Inn in Lewellen as a place to stay.

He showed beautiful sequences of Sharp-tailed Grouse and Greater Prairie-Chickens on their leks (dawn sounds included Wilson's Snipe). Steve commented that only 10% of the blinds for these leks were occupied. That sounds like a good enough reason to visit.

The Sandhills region, occupying about 20,000 square miles or roughly a quarter of the state of Nebraska, is a unique landscape in the Midwest.

Most of the prairie has never been plowed and may contain 85% intact natural habitat. It sits on the northern end of the Ogallala aquifer, which is quite thick in this region and relatively undepleted compared to its southern portions. (The August 2016 National Geographic has an informative article about the Ogallala aquifer.)

Much of the landscape consists of grassland-stabilized dunes separated by valleys containing shallow lakes, both permanent and transient. According to Wikipedia, the USFWS has described the Sandhills as the largest and most intricate wetland system in the United States.

Steve said the Sandhills are improving. Dune stabilization by vegetation is increasing and the aquifer at least for now is recharging adequately.

He illustrated this with photos of Trumpeter Swans, which need large, shallow lakes with little human disturbance to raise young, and are now breeding regularly in the Sandhills.

These birds were nearly extirpated early in the 20th century but have been successfully reintroduced in some of their former range.

In the extreme north-central part of Nebraska, is the Nature Conservancy's Niobrara Valley Preserve, a nearly 100 square mile area near the Niobrara National Scenic River managed by the National Park Service.

This area is richly biodiverse and incorporates elements of six different ecological types, resulting in an environment Steve likened to northern Minnesota but including tallgrass and distinctive Sandhills prairie.

Steve's sound track included Ovenbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler; I thought I heard a Wood Thrush. Nearby Smith Falls State Park and Fort Niobrara NWR would be interesting also.

Steve urged Sandhill neophytes to visit in September–October, presumably to avoid heat, humidity, and insects as well as to see fall migrants.

He suggested Smith Lake State Wildlife Area. His favorite month in the Sandhills is August, when he said (illustrated with photos) the best wildflower blooms occurred, especially prolific this year.

I thank Steve for presenting beautiful photos of fascinating, nearby places I know little about but want to visit.

Lewellen, Oshkosh, and Meadville (near Niobrara Valley Preserve) may see us soon!

Denver Field Ornithologists

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February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

DFO logo by Radeaux

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DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome new members: Ajit Antony and Liza Antony, Denver; Diane Birks, Centennial; Christopher Curwen, Denver; Yelana Love, Littleton; Matthew Brown and Beth Montgomery, Centennial; Ryan Parker, Denver; Cindy Sue Wilson, Arvada

Upcoming Speakers

Eric Eaton

“Beyond Birding:

Getting to Know

Insects”

Sept. 26, 2016

Kevin Cook

“200 Miles of Birding

in 200 Years”

Oct. 24, 2016

John Drummond

“Birding in Cuba”

Nov. 28, 2016

Paul Bannick

Owls

Jan. 23, 2017

Scott Somershoe

Appalachian Golden

Eagles

Feb. 27, 2017

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

- | | | |
|---|----|-------|
| ☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ | 25 |
| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ | 40 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26) | \$ | 10 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ | _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Holub Earns Ptarmigan Award

Member Survey Results

DFO's Shiny Apple

Featured This Month

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/NOVEMBER 2016/VOL 52 NO 11

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://DFOBIRDS.ORG)

Field Trips

Scoter Trip

Saturday, November 5

5:30 AM - 6:30 PM

Joey Kellner (Email: vireo1@comcast.net Phone: 303-978-1748)

Trail Difficulty: Strenuous

Maximum Participants: 11

Directions: Meet on the side of Deer Creek Canyon Rd just west of Wadsworth.

Join in an all-day search for migrant grebes, loons, and scoters. Bring lunch and come prepared for all kinds of weather and wide variety of driving conditions November can bring.

A State Parks pass is required for drivers of carpooling vehicles. We will carpool in 3 cars and return to meeting location no later than 7 p.m. **Register online or contact leader.**

Rueter-Hess Reservoir (Douglas Co.)

Sunday, November 6

8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Mary Cay Burger (Email: mcburger3@juno.com Phone: 720-940-8394)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at Barr CCC Park, 18964 S Twenty Mile Rd, Parker, CO, located on the SW corner of Main St and 20 Mile Rd for birding there and later at the Rueter-Hess Reservoir, which is open to the public only with entry permission.

Daylight savings time ends.

Tim Ryan of Parker Water Dept will be our guide. We will first bird Barr CCC Park, which is along

Continued on page 2

200 miles of birding in 200 years

The DFO program for October 24 will be presented by Kevin J. Cook, writer-naturalist from Loveland, Colorado. Kevin will present the history that never gets taught. It is the story of how the discoveries of place and of birds weave together over time.

Two centuries ago, while people in the East were discovering birds and debating how to name them, people in the West were discovering landscapes and lifescapes and passing along the wonder.

Western expeditions searched for cities of gold, routes for railroads, sites for military forts, places to mine precious metals. And somewhere in all that searching, people always found new wildlife.

Something well more than 150 years passed between the first bird documented in the unnamed place that would become Colorado and the actual naming of the place we now call home.

The Say's Phoebe (below) is the only Colorado bird for which both parts of the American name and the Latin name are eponyms of a person. But who was Say and why is his name on our bird? Kevin will enlighten us.

Continued on page 2



Say's Phoebe. Judith Edgar

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

Cherry Creek and then drive to reservoir for grassland species and waterfowl on the lake.

Bring binoculars, snacks, water, sunscreen, and a scope if you have one. **Register online or contact leader.**

Southwest Metro Area Ponds and Lakes

**Tuesday, November 8
7:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com
Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at parking lot for Harriman Lake Park off South Kipling St.

From Hwy 285, take S Kipling St south and turn right into the parking lot a short way south after crossing W Quincy Ave.

We will visit several lakes and ponds seeking a variety of ducks, gulls, grebes, and other waterbirds. Possible loons and scoters.

Stops will be decided the day of the trip but will likely include Harriman Lake, Blue Heron Park, Robert A. Easton Regional Park, Trailmark Lake, Aurora Rampart Reservoir, and Chatfield Reservoir (day use fee).

Scopes will be helpful. Bring liquids and snacks. **Register online or contact leader.**

Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR Saturday, November 12 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Pratyaydipta Rudra & Sreemala Das Majumder (Email: pratyayr@gmail.com
Phone: 919-699-4043)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Continued on next page



Kevin Cook.
Judith Edgar

200 MILES, continued from page 1

Kevin J. Cook was a contributor, columnist, and feature writer for *Bird Watcher's Digest* for 31 years. He has been a newspaper columnist since 1974.

And he has edited more than 1,000 research papers for science journals such as *The Auk*, *Condor*, and others.

More than just birding every county, park, and national forest in Colorado, Kevin has gone birding into Colorado's past by searching archives for the details of how Colorado's birdlife came to be known.

The DFO meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Ricketson Auditorium. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting.

Grants program needs your support

by Candice Johnson

As you renew your DFO membership for 2017, please consider making a generous donation to the DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Grants Fund. We depend solely on donations to operate the grants program since we take nothing from the General Fund.

For the past four years we have raised about \$5000 to \$6000/year to fund worthwhile projects in the Front Range and Colorado.

In 2016, DFO awarded seven grants that included funding student scholarships at Bird Conservancy of the Rockies camps. DFO also funded research on Mountain Plovers in South Park, habitat diversity and shortgrass steppe birds, Cinnamon Teal in the San Luis Valley, raptor success in Pawnee Grasslands, Flammulated Owl migration, and Clark's Nutcrackers in Rocky Mountain NP.

These grants support graduate and post-graduate student research in ornithology, as well as helping nurture a new generation of birders at summer camps.

Your generous donation along with your membership renewal will allow DFO to continue supporting avian research, conservation, and education.

Can DFO birders add 14 more bird species in 2016 to top 2015 total?

by Kayleen A. Niyo

Join the fun! Bob Righter presented an interesting suggestion to Chuck Hundertmark after reading Chuck's article in the October issue of *The Lark Bunting* and studying Ann Johnson's new DFO eBird report webpage (<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/BirdReports.aspx>).

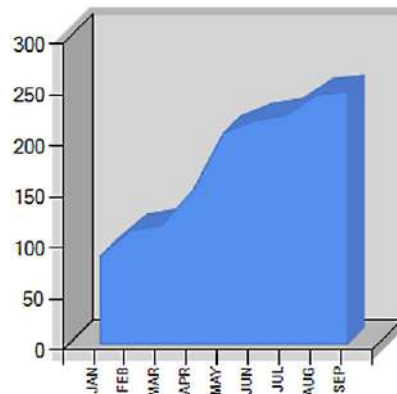
So, we asked Ann to design such a page using all the cumulative DFO eBird data since November 2009 and she came up with this gem (<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Reports/Cumulative.aspx>)!

Watch this website page to see how the DFO field trip cumulative species seen in the current year creep closer to previous yearly totals. Note the interesting increases in migration months! The September 2016 trip totals brought us to 247; the end of 2015 was 260! Can DFO see 14 more species in the last three months to beat 2015?

Check the interactive webpage and the monthly *Lark Bunting* each month to see the results! Good luck, DFO birders!

Past Years

Year	Species
2016	247
2015	260
2014	256
2013	261
2012	223
2011	235
2010	257
2009	118



2016

Change Year

Month	Species Seen	Cumulative	
JAN	86	86	86
FEB	88	111	+25
MAR	70	116	+5
APR	104	151	+35
MAY	160	207	+56
JUN	127	219	+12
JUL	117	224	+5
AUG	164	244	+20
SEP	118	247	+3

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Maximum Participants: 14

Directions: Meet at the Arsenal Visitors Center, 6550 Gateway Rd, Commerce City, CO.

General directions: On I-70 east, take exit 278, turn left onto Quebec St, turn right onto E 60th Ave, turn left onto Trenton St, continue onto Gateway Rd to Visitor Center.

In this prairie and lake environment we hope to see late shorebird migrants and many waterfowl and raptors. Bring a scope if you have one.

Be prepared to carpool because parking is limited at the lakes. Bison and deer are likely to be seen.

We may take several short walks on level trails only. Good for beginning birders. **Register online or contact leader.**

Belmar Historic Park
Saturday, November 12
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet in the parking lot near the lake. Belmar Historic Park is at 800 S Wadsworth Blvd in Lakewood.

From Alameda and Wadsworth go south on Wadsworth, turn west at the light on West Ohio Ave. Drive a short two blocks to the parking lot.

Bring water, binoculars, and a scope if you have one.

This is easy walking and wheelchair accessible on flat surfaces and is an excellent trip for beginning birders. **Register online or contact leader.**

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt)

Sunday, November 13

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Kevin Corwin (Email: kevygudguy@aol.com Phone: 720-482-8454)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue.

Go one mile west. Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Meet just inside the park in the lot right next to Prospect Lake.

This is a half-day trip around the lakes. Bring snacks and water. Dress for the weather.

Hopefully there will be open water for some nice duck viewing. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County)

Sunday, November 13

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP.

From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles.

Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Continued on next page

Last Month's Program: Bug-watching

Tim Johnson

A lot was new at the DFO meeting on September 26: (1) the venue, which was the Denver Zoo's conference building; (2) the refreshment table accompanying the venue; and (3) best of all, a well-known entomologist as speaker.

Eric R. Eaton, main author of the *Kaufman Field Guide to Insects of North America*, gave an exceptionally well-organized presentation, "Beyond Birding: The Joys of Bug-Watching," to an audience of about 70 souls who were perhaps secretly pleased to be away from politics that evening.

Eric, who attended Oregon State University, has worked for many institutions including the Smithsonian. He has become a renowned spokesperson for the world of insects (I was pleased to learn that he has written for *Ranger Rick*, which our son enjoyed as a youngster) and has a delightful blog (<http://bugeric.blogspot.com>) that currently features mimicry.

Disclaimer: I sort beetles as a volunteer at the DMNS and am highly prejudiced about Eric's topic.

Eric made my job easy by organizing his talk into seven sections plus a coda, on the theme of what motives might be shared between the enthusiasm of birders and bug-watchers. He provided his own photographs as illustrations, and I hope that these will become available online at the DFO website (<http://dfobirds.org/>).

Motive #1: We look for natural beauty. Eric's first photo contrasted a Western Tanager with a jewel beetle (I didn't get the species name, but the family of Jewel Beetles or Buprestidae are famous for their spectacular metallic colors). He showed other insects including a brilliant Saussure's Blue-winged Grasshopper.

Motive #2: We like the challenge of finding the creatures. Eric showed a Gray Catbird as a birder's challenge illustrating camouflage in several insect species. An example was the Elm Sphinx Moth, a large (4-inch wingspan) but almost invisible moth against a bark background.

Motive #3: We like species diversity. Birds are truly outclassed here, by about 100:1 according to <http://wikipedia.org>. Erik illustrated the diversity of Tiger Beetles, fast-flying predators of which there are about 90 species in Colorado.

Motive #4: We like drama. Just as there is drama in watching a jaeger chase terns, there is plenty of drama in the insect world. Erik illustrated this with several videos; the most dramatic for me was that of a Thread-waisted Wasp dashing along the ground with a large paralyzed caterpillar suspended beneath her.

There also was human drama; recently, several spectators watched me flee in terror after I spotted a two-inch Cicada Killer (wasp, genus *Sphecius*) investigating my wife's clothing. She was miffed but unharmed.

Motive #5: The challenge of identification. Sheer species numbers make this difficult for insects, and Eric covered several issues that birders don't have to deal with. This includes matching larval stages to a species. The Douglas Fir Tussock Moth whose female is immobile exhibits extreme sexual dimorphism. There are extreme cases of mimicry like Eric's example of a robberfly species imitating a bumblebee. But Eric should try finding a Common Potoo in the

Continued on page 5

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 4

daytime! Many insect species can be separated only by microscopic details and even families can be difficult to differentiate.

Motive #6: Potential for Discovery. Eric and family have personally come up with a number of quite conspicuous insects far outside their normal range. These include the Emerald Euphoria Flower Scarab, not seen in Colorado for 100 years, and the Red Rock Skimmer, a dragonfly normally found in Arizona and S. California that he found on Cheyenne Mountain near Colorado Springs.

Motive #7: Desire to preserve biodiversity. Eric presented a grab-bag of activities both solitary (maintaining a “bee condo,” a block of wood drilled with holes of varying diameter to attract native bees and their predators), and social (the Xerces Society or Mile High Bug Club).

He also suggested group activities like those included in National Moth Week. Or just invite your neighbors over for a beer, hang out a sheet with a black light, maybe break out the lava lamp, and see what insects you can attract.

Eric ended with notes on bug-watching equipment: close-focus binoculars, camera or good smartphone, field guide, binary keys, and microscope for advanced work. Technique should include not touching unless you know what you're doing. For online resources, he recommended Journey North (<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/>) and I suggest Bugguide (<http://bugguide.net/node/view/15740>).

Next time I'm struggling with a binary key to beetle families, I'll remember Eric's presentation.



Listen for the flocks of Sandhill Cranes moving south! *Jim Esten*

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

Annual Barrow's Goldeneye Count to Silverthorne Friday, November 18 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Paul Slingsby (Email: paslingsby@comcast.net
Phone: 303-422-3728)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the RTD Park-n-Ride located at Union Blvd and W 2nd Place.

From US 6 go south to the second stoplight. Turn left and proceed toward the end of W 2nd Place. Look for the group at the southeast corner of the Park-n-Ride lot.

This a Friday trip. We will count Barrow's Goldeneyes and other birds at the Silverthorne water treatment plant and then drive to Hot Sulfur Springs (rosy-finches), Lake Granby, Shadow Mountain Lake, and Grand Lake.

Spotting scopes and 2-way radios will be useful. Dress for cold, windy weather. Insulated, windproof leg coverings and warm boots are recommended.

Bring water and snacks, we'll find a warm place to buy lunch. Plan to be back at meeting place by dark. **Register online or contact leader.**

Chatfield State Park Saturday, November 19 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Edmund J Holub (Email: edmund.holub@gmail.com
Phone: 303-979-2194)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Directions: Meet at swim beach by entering west entrance of park off S Wadsworth, 1.5 miles south of C-470. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Be prepared to walk 1–1.5

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

miles, possibly in snow. Bring snacks and water; lunch is optional. **Register online or contact leader.**

Pueblo area

Sunday, November 20

6:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Ira Sanders & Tammy Sanders
(Email: zroadrunner14@gmail.com Phone: 303-278-7172)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 15

Directions: Meet at SW corner of Safeway parking lot at NE corner of Yosemite and Lincoln Ave in Lone Tree about 1 mile west of I-25.

Park away from store. State Parks pass required.

Bring lunch, snacks, water, sunblock. We will be birding Pueblo City Park, Valco Ponds, and other areas at the leader's discretion.

We are meeting at 6 a.m. and leaving no later than 6:15 a.m. Be prepared to carpool. **Register online or contact leader.**

Littleton Area Lakes

Tuesday, November 22

7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at South Platte Reservoir. From C470 take the Platte Canyon Road / South Platte Park exit.

From Platte Canyon Road at Depew Street turn southeast onto the entrance road for South Platte Park. Continue past a 90 degree left turn and the first parking lot, and meet in the second parking lot.

We will visit bodies of water in the Littleton area seeking a

Continued on next page



The National Park Service turned 100 on August 25, 2016! Celebrate by camping in Yellowstone National Park in Oct and see a Great Gray Owl! South of Canyon Village north of Hayden Valley, YNP, 14 September 2016. *Ira Sanders*

Make your website experience the best

So much of our DFO business is now conducted through our website. Remember these helpful hints to make your experience the best.

Check the top of the right column on the home page (<http://dfobirds.org/>) for any news and announcements. If you have something to be added, contact any board member.

With all of the wonderful DFO field trips, sometimes it's hard to remember if you have registered for one or not. Simply login, go to Upcoming Trips, and click on the blue button that says "Show/Edit My Upcoming Trips" (<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/UpcomingTrips.aspx>). If you forgot one, register for it. If you have to cancel one, delete it to make space for someone else.

Personalize your information by adding a photo under Members to your profile in the membership directory. Hey, we're all birding buddies at some point in time and it's nice to have faces to put with names.

Check the Monthly Activity Report (<http://dfobirds.org/Members/MonthlyActivityReport.aspx>) frequently and welcome new members.

Involve yourself in the organization by reading board minutes and reports (<http://dfobirds.org/Members/Business.aspx>). Your ideas and feedback are always welcome!

If you encounter an error message, please click on "Send DFO a Message" on the home page as soon as possible. We may need to contact you for more information to trouble-shoot the problem.

Fall 2016 Speaker Series

All talks at Denver Museum of Nature & Science, 2001 Colorado Blvd.

Presented in partnership with Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

Tickets: <http://www.dmns.org/learn/adults/after-hours> or 303-370-6000; \$12 Museum or Bird Conservancy member, \$15 nonmember

BIRDS AND CHANGE: Adaptation, Survival, and Our Changing World

Three special presentations exploring new ideas and cutting-edge science by leaders in the fields of ornithology and evolutionary biology.

November 7, 7 p.m., Ricketson Auditorium

Christopher C. Witt, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Biology/Curator of Birds, Museum of Southwestern Biology, University of New Mexico. Chris will share his biogeographical research pertaining to bird adaptations at high altitudes.

November 15, 5:30 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.,

Gates Planetarium

Dr. Garth Spellman

DMNS's Curator of Ornithology uses the Planetarium's digital dome experience to explain how environmental changes affect bird species. This event will be offered twice: 5:30 or 7:30 p.m.

November 29, 7 p.m., Ricketson Auditorium

Dr. Renée Duckworth

Assistant Professor of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at the University of Arizona explores the interspecies dynamics of Mountain and Western Bluebirds living in fire-affected landscapes.

**Thank you for your contribution
to the Research, Education,
and Conservation Grant Fund:
Jeane and Glenn Hageman, Jeff
Stephenson**

Field Trips

Continued from page 6

variety of ducks, gulls, and other waterbirds, with a cross section of landbirds while we are at it.

Stops will probably include South Platte Reservoir, the adjacent South Platte River, Centennial Park, Ketring Park. Chatfield Reservoir is a possibility (day use fee).

Scopes will be helpful. Bring liquids and snacks. Some walking at some sites. **Register online or contact leader.**

South Platte River Trail at E 88th Ave and I-76 Friday, November 25 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Jackie King (Email: jackie.king@ccd.edu Phone: 720-381-3314)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the parking area at 88th Ave and South Platte River Trail.

From I-76 take E 88th Ave exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles, then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead.

Notice this is a Friday. We will look for ducks, hawks, falcons, and whatever else that may fly in. Dress for the weather. Sunscreen suggested.

We will walk on easy, wheelchair accessible trails. Nearest restrooms are at the 7-11 just north across the street from the meeting location. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek State Park (Arapahoe County) Saturday, November 26 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Mary Cay Burger (Email: mcburger3@juno.com Phone: 720-940-8394)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the west marina parking lot. State Parks pass or day pass required.

Coleader Bob Righter, author and historian.

Look for gulls, waterfowl, and a variety of birds. Habitats include deep water, marshlands, mixed grasses, and cottonwoods.

We will carpool to the various stops and walk 1–2 miles. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, and sunscreen. Scopes are useful. **Register online or contact leader.**

—Scheduled by Mary Cay Burger

☑TUNDRA SWAN (2 CHECKLISTS)

☑WOOD DUCK (6 CHECKLISTS)

Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat/Sawhill (Boulder County)
11/1/2015
[eBird Checklist](#)

Chatfield State Park
11/22/2014
[eBird Checklist](#)

Chatfield State Park
11/23/2013
[eBird Checklist](#)

Pueblo area
11/3/2013
[eBird Checklist](#)

Pueblo area
11/28/2010
[eBird Checklist](#)

Pueblo area
11/28/2009
[eBird Checklist](#)

☑GADWALL (73 CHECKLISTS)

New tool unlocks a wealth of history on DFO website

by Chuck Hundertmark, Past President

There's a wealth of history on the DFO website, and new tools added recently can help unlock that history.

The starting point for an exploration of our past field trips is the "Field Trip eBird Reports" link on the Field Trips drop down menu at <http://tinyurl.com/juc5yow>.

The last three links on the DFO Field Trips Birding Reports page can be particularly useful for planning field trips, especially if you are a trip leader.

A trip leader contemplating a November field trip to Jackson Reservoir might wonder if November is a good month for late migrants.

Opening "**Checklists by Location**," and selecting Jackson Lake Reservoir from the drop down menu will reveal a list of all species recorded for that location on DFO field trips since 2009.

To see what can be found in November, however, one more step is needed under "**Checklists by Location**."

Click "**Show Dates & Checklist**," then scroll down to see all of the field trip reports listed by date.

The trip leader might be surprised to find there have been no Jackson Reservoir field trips in November in recent years. That can mean there's an opportunity to fill in a gap in our records for that location.

Wondering when you can expect to find a Ross's Goose on a field trip? Check "**Trips by Species**."

You'll find that November trips to Denver City Park, the Pueblo area, and Dodd Reservoir have found Ross's Geese during past Novembers (see screen shot above).

And what about the species that have been found during November throughout DFO's birding area?

Try "**Species by Month**." You'll find that 149 species have been found on DFO trips in November since 2009.

Click the double arrows to the left of any species name and you'll find links to the checklists on which that species appears.

If I were looking for a Wood Duck in November, I'd give serious thought to heading down Pueblo way.

Enjoy exploring the past DFO eBird reports on the DFO website!



Little Gull, Chatfield SP, 4 September 2016. *Ira Sanders*

Denver Field Ornithologists

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Kristine Haglund	303-906-8044	kahaglund1@aol.com
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January	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

DFO logo by Radeaux

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COBirds	Internet bird-sighting discussion list	cobirds@googlegroups.com
DMNS Liaison	Jeff Stephenson	jstephenson@dmns.org
Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome new members: Jack Foard, Lakeland, FL; Gwen Raftery, Centennial; Marcy Robertson, Denver

Upcoming Speakers

Kevin Cook

"200 Miles of Birding
in 200 Years" Oct. 24, 2016

John Drummond

"Birding in Cuba" Nov. 28, 2016

Paul Bannick

Owls Jan. 23, 2017

Scott Somershoe

Appalachian Golden
Eagles Feb. 27, 2017

Dave Leatherman

Squirrels and Birds
Mar. 27, 2017

Nathan Pieplow

Bird Song Apr. 25, 2017
(New Date)

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 25
☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>)	\$ 40
☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26)	\$ 10
☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Pl,
Englewood CO 80111-5742

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

2016 Species Challenge

Website Hints

Unlock History



The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/DECEMBER 2016/VOL 52 NO 12

[HTTP://DFOBIRDS.ORG](http://dfobirds.org)

Field Trips

Annual Barrow's Goldeneye Count to Longmont Friday, December 2 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Chuck Hundertmark (Email:
chundertmark8@gmail.com
Phone: 303-604-0531)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet in the parking lot of the Jim Hamm Nature Area, Longmont.

From the Denver area, take I-25 north to exit 240. Drive west on Hwy 119 (Ken Pratt Blvd) to County Line Road.

Head north on County Line Road and look for the nature area on the left just past 17th Ave.

We'll look for Barrow's Goldeneyes down from the mountains as well as other early winter waterfowl. We'll be driving to several area lakes.

Bring water, snacks, and scopes; dress for the weather including shoes intended for sloshing through mud if the weather indicates.

We'll end with a stop for lunch and a recap of our morning at the Crane Hollow Cafe, or another local spot. **Register online or contact leader.**

First Creek at Denver Open Space Saturday, December 3 7:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Patrick O'Driscoll (Email:
patodrisk@gmail.com Phone:
303-837-0864)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: From East Denver

Continued on page 2

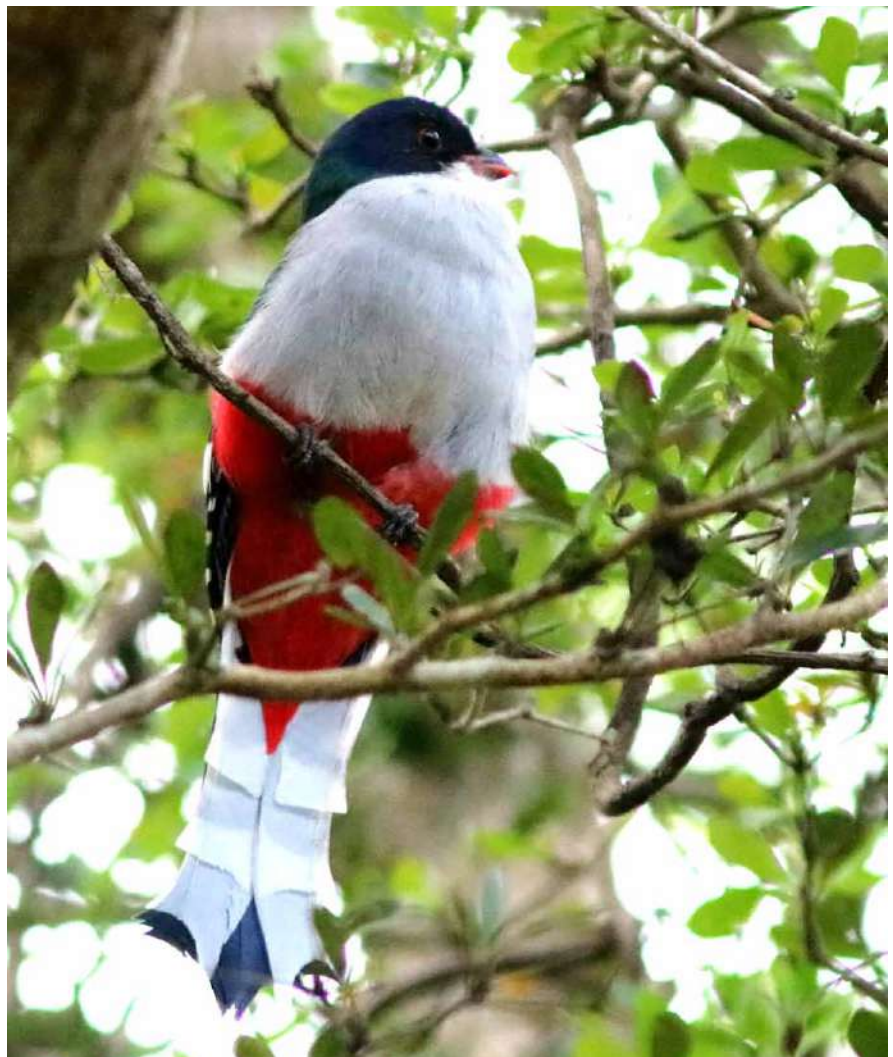
'Birds of Cuba' promises to be fascinating

On November 28 DFO will host John Drummond's fascinating program on the "Birds of Cuba." Cuba, as the largest island in the West Indies, has a high level of endemism and for this reason is very attractive to visiting world naturalists.

Until very recently visits by U.S. citizens to view the natural beauty of Cuba have required (and still do) a permit from the U.S. Government that the visit falls under twelve allowed purposes.

This presentation describes a trip that John and a small group made to Cuba in April 2016. Our prime guide was Arturo Kirkconnell, Jr., the son of Arturo

Continued on page 4



Cuban Trogon, Cuba. John Drummond

Field Trips

Continued from page 1

take 56th Ave east toward Pena Blvd. First Creek parking lot is just before Pena on your left (north).

Or take I-70 east to Pena Blvd. Drive north to 56th Ave Exit. Turn left at the light and at the bottom of the off ramp, pass under the highway and turn right, almost immediately, into the First Creek parking lot.

Patrick O'Driscoll will introduce Denver's newest eBird hotspot. First Creek was right under our noses for anyone driving out Pena Blvd to the airport. In August, the city dedicated the 198-acre First Creek at DEN Open Space.

DFO's first outing there will be an unpredictable adventure. If there is water in the creek, expect riparian-cottonwood-prairie species.

We will walk 1.5 miles of paved path along the creek upstream to Tower Road and back. We'll also cover at least half a mile of Buckley Road, a closed pedestrian-bicycle strip that shares Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR's east boundary fence. And we'll check First Creek's cottonwood groves and prairie dog town for raptors and more.

Bring water and snacks. Note: At present there are no restrooms at this location. The closest service stations are on Tower Road (Green Valley Ranch) and East 40th (Montbello). **Register online or contact leader.**

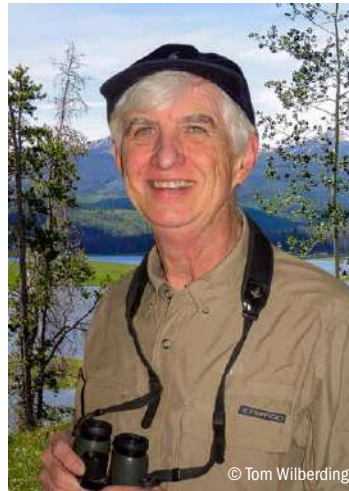
**South Platte River Trail at
East 74th Ave and I-76
Sunday, December 4
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Amy Morton (Email:
amymorton@yahoo.com
Phone: 720-570-6146)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Continued on next page

DFO Board retreats, then charges ahead!



From the President

Joe Roller

Many of you responded to DFO's summer survey with your best ideas for DFO's next steps toward better birding. On October 15 the DFO Board devoted a full Saturday to a retreat with the theme of *Growth!*

Moderator Larry Modesitt kicked things off by pointing out that we were embarking on the two stage process—thinking, followed by action. As he put it, "Thinking without action is empty; action without thinking is blind."

First, the "thinking" part.

We sifted through the best of your ideas from the survey and brainstormed, adding new ones. Those ideas are the seeds of DFO growth, and over the next

few months you will see them germinate, burst forth, and in time, flourish. We'll need volunteers. You'll have a chance to tend the crops!

Here are just a few examples of the many good ideas from the retreat. We'll find volunteers to pitch in and make these dreams come true.

One big idea from the retreat is to quench members' thirst for learning by offering DFO workshops. Class time + field observation = workshop!

Examples of workshops DFO may set up include the following. (1) ID challenges. Gulls? Yikes! Why don't they lump them all as "*Larus vulgaris*"? (2) Taming your wild camera. (3) Beginners, watch this!

Here's an ambitious project for DFO: Two "Big Months," then one "Big Year."

You've heard of a "Big Day." Imagine what a DFO Big Year would be like. David Suddjian, new board member, organized a highly successful Big Year with the Santa Cruz Bird Club before he moved here. A master list of species seen on every scheduled field trip in that county was kept during one whole year.

Interest was keen, and the club held more field trips than ever. New members joined, eager to nudge the species list higher. Chasing rare species was not part of the plan, nor were solo efforts. The idea was to have a goal and add excitement to club trips.

David plans to get DFO used to the concept by having a DFO Big Month next May and again in September. After those, we'll go all out with a DFO Big Year for 2018. He'll figure out the geographic scope of event, e.g., Front Range counties only, so watch for details next spring.

Field Trip Committee plans were also discussed at the retreat. A goal we are about to achieve is to run three field trips on many weekends, a big commitment for leaders and schedulers. More weekday trips are being offered now. Which certified trip leaders will tackle the two-day, overnight field trips DFO members are clamoring for?

Continued on page 3

At the retreat we liked the idea of Citizen Science Field Trips planned by Dr. Garth Spellman, Curator of Ornithology at DMNS.

One project would be breeding season surveys along the South Platte River to study the subspecies of White-breasted Nuthatch and Warbling Vireo there. What happens where the ranges of the populations meet or are close together?

The data DFO gathers could help taxonomists decide if each subspecies merits elevation to full species status.

A project at Green Mountain in south-central Wyoming would focus on one species of jay. This area is of interest because it falls in a gap between the ranges of the Rocky Mountain and Pacific populations of Steller's Jay.

Dr. Spellman is proposing a four-day camping excursion to conduct a full field survey. A half-dozen DFO volunteers would first be trained in the field protocol, then a full census would document all species found there. The same protocol could be used for other species and other areas.

How about citizen science closer to home? There is a new heronry, ripe for study, on the islet in Grasmere Lake in Denver's Washington Park. Black-crowned Night-Herons began breeding there in numbers only last year, with at least 75 adults on nests in April 2015, and similar numbers this spring.

Snowy Egrets migrate through Washington Park, but only this spring were there multiple nests. DFO citizen scientists could watch this expanding colony closely as it evolves.

How many scores of nests can the colony support? Will the trees be denuded? Will other species nest? What will happen if Denver drains the lake again?

Denver City Park boasts two island colonies, each with nesting cormorants and egrets, right under our noses. (In fact, very close to our noses, so be cautious—count cormorants from upwind.) Could DFO start a colony watch there?

As you can see, DFO retreated and is now charging ahead.

Volunteers needed for raptor monitoring

Jeffco Open Space is seeking experienced raptor monitoring volunteers to join our Raptor Monitoring Program for 2017 and beyond.

Please join our group of dedicated raptor monitors to help protect raptors living on and near Jeffco Open Space.

We monitor approximately 30 raptor territories across Jefferson County including territories of Golden Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Prairie Falcons, Red-tailed Hawks, and Great Horned Owls from late December into August. Volunteer orientation will take place in early January, date TBD.

Please contact Christine Hartman at chartman@jeffco.us for more information.

Field Trips

Continued from page 2

Maximum Participants: 15

Directions: Driving north on I-76, exit at East 74th Ave and turn west over the freeway. Look for the parking lot on the south side of the road.

Driving south on I-76, exit at East 88th Ave. Drive west to Dahlia and south on Dahlia to E. 74th Ave. Turn right (west) over the freeway and look for the parking lot on the south side of the road.

Join DFO for an easy, half-day, 3-mile walk along the South Platte River. This area of South Platte is known for great up-close views of all of Colorado's duck species as well as herons and numerous raptors.

We will walk the site's paved bike path in both the South and North directions looking for Long-tailed Ducks, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Hooded Mergansers. At times the riparian corridor can be productive with late warblers, sparrows, and various mountain species.

Come and get great views of our winter bird residents on this easy and rewarding South Platte River walk! **Register online or contact leader.**

Chase Trip

Saturday, December 10

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Pratyaydipta Rudra & Sreemala Das Majumder (Email: pratyayr@gmail.com Phone: 919-699-4043)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 6060 N Broadway to carpool. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

Not a typical chase trip. In-

Continued on page 4

Field Trips

Continued from page 3

stead of looking for very specific rarities at very specific locations, we will choose general areas based on recent sightings.

The exact route will be determined nearer to the actual date based on weather and various sightings.

A general idea about the locations would be Denver, Adams, or Weld counties. A general idea about target birds will be raptors, waterfowl, and potential rare birds.

Be prepared to drive/ride more than a hundred miles, but hiking will be at most moderate. Bring binoculars, scope, snacks, lunch, and plenty of water.

We will carpool in three cars and drivers will be reimbursed for mileage. If you have walkie talkies, please bring them. They will be very useful when we caravan. **Register online or contact leader.**

**Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR
Saturday, December 10
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM**

Jill Boice (Email:
jill@booksandcats.net
Phone: 303-863-7580)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Arsenal Visitors Center, 6550 Gateway Rd, Commerce City, CO.

General directions: On I-70 east, take exit 278, turn left onto Quebec St, turn right onto E 60th Ave, turn left onto Trenton St, continue onto Gateway Rd to Visitor Center.

In this prairie and lake environment we hope to see many waterfowl and raptors. Be prepared to carpool because parking is limited at the lakes

We will walk around Lake Ladore, about a 1.8 mile walk on

Continued on next page

BIRDS OF CUBA, continued from page 1



Bee Hummingbird, Cuba. John Drummond

wintering migrants.

John's presentation illustrates his search to see these endemic birds including the national bird of Cuba, the Cuban Trogon, and the world's smallest bird, the Bee Hummingbird. And you will see some of the culture that still exists in Cuba including old cars.

John started birdwatching in his native England as a teenager and worked for 35 years in the oil industry, which allowed him to travel extensively on business and bird in his spare time. His world list is around 7,250.

Moving to Colorado from Virginia in 2006, John became active in the birding community, is a past DFO board member, a CFO trip leader, a Colorado Rare Bird Committee member, and a regional coordinator for the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II. Currently John is a partner and trip leader for Partnership for International Birding.

Kirkconnell, Sr. who coauthored the definitive bird guide book, *Field Guide to the Birds of Cuba*.

John will also refer to another excellent book, *Endemic Birds of Cuba*, by Nils Navarro.

Cuba contains a wide variety of habitats including tropical forests, palm savannah, mangroves, coastal wetlands, and coral islands.

They support 27 endemic birds and a further 22 West Indian endemics plus a large number of North American

**Thank you for your contribution to the
Research, Education, and Conservation
Grant Fund: Tina Jones, Pamela Kloetzli,
Beth Madden and Kathanne Lynch, Linda
Moore, Joe Roller, Betsy Shaw, Denise and
Danny Smith, Mary Ann Tavery, Cara Welch**

6 more bird species needed to beat 2015

by Kayleen A. Niyo

Only two more months to get six more species to surpass 260 total species counted by DFO birders in 2015! <http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Reports/Cumulative.aspx>

2016

Month	Species Seen	Cumulative	
JAN	86	86	86
FEB	88	111	+25
MAR	70	116	+5
APR	104	151	+35
MAY	160	207	+56
JUN	127	219	+12
JUL	117	224	+5
AUG	164	244	+20
SEP	118	247	+3
OCT	128	255	+8

See Bob Righter's challenge on page 3 of http://dfobirds.org/LarkBunting/Archives/2010-2019/2016/11_Nov_2016_LB.pdf. Can we do it?! Check out lots of past Nov/Dec trips and birds that might help.

Open the 2016 species seen so far in the "Species by Year" page. <http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Reports/SpeciesByYear.aspx>

Then open "Species by Month" (in a new browser or tab) and choose Nov or Dec to compare with the 2016 list and see what needed species you may be able to find. <http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Reports/SpeciesByMonth.aspx>

How about a Ross's Goose listed on two past trips in December?!

Enjoy the game!



Red-throated Loons, Cherry Creek State Park, 29 October 2016. John Breitsch

Field Trips

Continued from page 4

level trails. Then we will check Lake Mary. Good for beginning birders.

Bathrooms at the Visitor's Center open at 9 AM. Lunch afterward optional. **Register online or contact leader.**

Cherry Creek SP Wetlands Loop (Arapahoe County)
Sunday, December 11
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Karen von Saltza (Email: kvonsaltza@yahoo.com)
Phone: 303-941-4881)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the Prairie Loop lot in Cherry Creek SP. From either park entrance, follow Lake View Rd to the Prairie Loop that is located at the south rim of the reservoir. State Parks pass or day pass required.

This is a half day of walking that passes through most of the important habitats found in the park over a distance of about 3 miles. Trails could be slippery or muddy, so dress accordingly. Bring water and snacks; lunch is optional. Beginning birders are welcome. **Register online or contact leader.**

Southwestern Metro Area
Tuesday, December 13
7:15 AM - 1:00 PM

David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com)
Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at the Home Depot at 4277 S Eldridge St, Morrison. From C-470 take the Quincy exit. Cross over the bridge on W Quincy Ave and park at the far end of the Home Depot parking lot that faces an open field to the south.

Specific birding spots will

Continued on page 6

Field Trips

Continued from page 5

be selected the day of the trip based on what is around and weather, but will likely include Denver West for possible winter rarities, Red Rocks Trading Post for foothill birds, and one or two other spots in search of interesting winter birds. **Register online or contact leader.**

**Denver Christmas Bird Count
details on page 8
Saturday, December 17**

**South Platte Park
Wednesday, December 28
7:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

David Suddjian (Email:
dsuddjian@gmail.com
Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate
Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at the south end of South Platte Park near C-470. From C-470 take the Platte Canyon Rd/South Platte Park exit.

From Platte Canyon Rd at Depew Street turn southeast onto the entrance road for South Platte Park. Continue past a 90 degree left turn and the first parking lot, and meet in the second parking lot.

We will begin scoping South Platte Reservoir with a chance for interesting waterbirds, then explore the river corridor of the southern area of South Platte Park, and probably walk south of C-470 into the area of Chatfield below the dam.

Be ready to walk on snowy paths for about 2 miles. We may drive to another nearby location to end the trip. Dress for the weather. Bring snacks and drinks. **Register online or contact leader.**

—Scheduled by Jill Boice

Last Month's Program: 200 Miles

Tim Johnson

On October 24, about 70 lucky souls dropped out of their normal lives to tune in Kevin J. Cook's presentation on Colorado's ornithological history, entitled "200 Miles of Birding in 200 years." (It's 200 miles from the Alpine Visitors Center in RMNP to the Nebraska border.)

Kevin has worked as a writer-naturalist-tour operator-teacher-seminar leader since 1980. He earned a BA in biology (1978) and an MA in wildlife biology from Colorado State University (1989), worked with the National Park Service, and consulted for the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

A well-known lecturer and author—he wrote for *Birdwatcher's Digest* for 23 years—he unleashed a freewheeling talk about little-known aspects of Colorado's birding past. He included his own and others' stories and many anecdotes, all of which I am tempted to call *gonzo ornithological history* in honor of another well-known Coloradan, Hunter S. Thompson.

(An article about Thompson and his "gonzovationist" illustrator Ralph Steadman can be found at <http://www.audubon.org/news/inside-ralph-steadmans-gonzo-world-nextinct-birds>.)

Kevin began with his tortuous initiation into the career of wildlife historian, which reached an epiphany when he encountered the story of Rollo Beck and the Guadalupe Caracara.

Beck was a gifted California bird collector-for-hire and was employed by Walter Rothschild (who amassed the largest collection of zoologic specimens ever assembled by one person) to obtain specimens of the Guadalupe Caracara from Guadalupe Island off California.

The bird had been in decline for years due to the introduction of goats in the early 19th century and cats later on. On December 1, 1900, Beck encountered a flock of 11 and shot 9 of them. Guadalupe Caracaras were never seen again.

The fortuitous intersection of seafarers wanting goat meat, a wealthy eccentric collector, and an entrepreneur with an 8th-grade education and a gun, resulted in the extinction of a species and touched off a fascination with history and wildlife in Kevin Cook.

Kevin then introduced Thompson G. Marsh. He was a professor at the University of Denver law school for 60 years, an enthusiastic birder, and a cofounder of the CFO and ABA.

As part of a master's thesis (1931), Marsh assembled a list of birds seen in Colorado organized chronologically. The first bird described definitively in Colorado, near the Dallas Divide and present town of Ridgway in the early 19th century, was possibly a Dusky Grouse.

Words used to describe it were "size of Castilian hen" and "very tasty." However, since no drawing was made and nobody knows exactly what a Castilian hen was at that time, let alone had a recipe for it, the identity is not secure.

In early Spanish maps of Colorado, the San Luis Valley is described as "Valley of Cranes." If definitive documentation could be found before the

Continued on page 7

Fall 2016 Speaker Series

All talks at Denver Museum of Nature & Science, 2001 Colorado Blvd.

Presented in partnership with Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

Tickets: <http://www.dmns.org/learn/adults/after-hours> or 303-370-6000; \$12 Museum or Bird Conservancy member, \$15 nonmember

BIRDS AND CHANGE: Adaptation, Survival, and Our Changing World

Three special presentations exploring new ideas and cutting-edge science by leaders in the fields of ornithology and evolutionary biology.

November 15, 5:30 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.,

Gates Planetarium

Dr. Garth Spellman

DMNS's Curator of Ornithology uses the Planetarium's digital dome experience to explain how environmental changes affect bird species. This event will be offered twice: 5:30 or 7:30 p.m.

November 29, 7 p.m., Ricketson Auditorium

Dr. Renée Duckworth

Assistant Professor of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at the University of Arizona explores the interspecies dynamics of Mountain and Western Bluebirds living in fire-affected landscapes.

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM, continued from page 6

late 1700s, the Sandhill Crane would be Colorado's first bird.

Another early but puzzling record comes from the journals of Zebulon Pike's 1806 expedition, which described a bird caught on Christmas Day of 1806 as "green with a hooked beak."

This has been variously identified as a Carolina Parakeet, Gray Jay, and Northern Shrike. According to Kevin, the noted ornithologist and AOU founder Elliot Coues offered the Carolina Parakeet identity. The color seems right, but on Christmas in Colorado?

Kevin went on to mention a num-

ber of other explorers and naturalists with connections to Colorado.

In addition to Elliot Coues, notable among these was Thomas Say, who was the designated zoologist on the 1819–1920 Stephen Long expedition to Colorado.

Expedition records include the first official descriptions of some of our favorites: Say's Phoebe, Western Kingbird, Lazuli Bunting, and Orange-crowned Warbler.

We all know the names of John Fremont, John Cassin, and Spencer Baird. But I for one had never heard of Robert Ridgway, a systematist and Smithsonian bird curator

who collected the first known Flammulated Owl specimen; or Martha Maxwell, Boulder-based taxidermist and friend of Ridgway and Baird who had a Screech Owl subspecies named after her; or Wells Cooke, who wrote the first annotated checklist of Colorado birds.

Kevin's unique delivery is not reproducible in print, and I have left out some fascinating anecdotes (a Tinamou ranch in Baca County?). So, keep your eye on <http://dfobirds.org/Programs/Past.aspx> for the video, and be sure to have <https://www.wikipedia.org> open to explore the history further.

63rd Denver Christmas Bird Count – Saturday, December 17, 2016

Count Leader/Compiler: Joey Kellner (303-978-1748), vireo1@comcast.net

Feeder Coordinator: Bob Shade (303-975-2476), wrshade3@gmail.com

Potluck Coordinator: Cheryl Teuton (303-912-3341), Please call her with what dish you can bring.

Compilation (and potluck) meeting: 5 p.m., Chatfield State Park Headquarters (south side of the lake near the Heronry Overlook); **State Parks vehicle entry pass required**. Please carpool if possible. Ask your Area Leader about Compiler's offer for reimbursement.

All are encouraged to participate in the annual Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) sponsored the National Audubon Society. To participate, call one of the Area Leaders listed below to assist in a particular area, or call the Count Compiler (contact info above) if you would like to help in an area that still needs additional observers. After a day in the field, all participants are invited to attend the compilation meeting to feast, warm up, chat with other birders, and find out how the count fared. It is a lot of fun. The compilation meeting will be at 5 p.m. (see location above). **Feel free to bring a dish or desert to share!**

Fees: None! So, no excuses! Come have a great time and help count birds! Beginners and experts all welcome!

The 15-mile diameter "count circle" is subdivided into 24 "count areas" each with a leader. Area locations and names and phone numbers of Area Leaders are listed below. Participants should contact Area Leaders for count day meeting times and places.

Area Number and Location	Area Leader	Phone Number
1. Red Rocks Park	Dan Stringer	720-854-5911
2. Lower Bear Creek	Michael Kiessig	303-909-5169
2A. Bear Creek Lake Park	Mark Amershek	303-329-8646
3. Bow Mar/Marston	Chris Rurik	253-225-7104
4A. Lower South Platte - East	Ed Holub	303-979-2194
4B. Lower South Platte - West	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
5. Highline Ditch	Nancy Crews	303-791-8276
6. Plum Creek	Norm Erthal	303-917-2596
7A. Middle South Platte - West	Charlie Lawrence	303-795-9126
7B. Middle South Platte - East	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
8. Chatfield State Park	Joey Kellner	303-978-1748
9. Upper South Platte *	Jill Holden	720-288-4018
10. Lower Deer Creek (Chatfield Arboretum)	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
11. Upper Deer Creek	Paul Slingsby	303-422-3728
12. Yegge Peak	Ann Bonnell	303-979-6211
13. Doublehead Mountain	Amy Davis	303-549-7759
14. North Turkey Creek	Ed Furlong	303-956-8321
15. Indian Hills	Dick Prickett	303-674-0217
16. Upper Bear Creek	Laura Steadman	843-319-5086
17. Ken Caryl Ranch	Tom Bush	303-919-5040
18. Garrison Gate	Leader needed	
19. Morrison/Willowbrook	Dean Shoup	720-272-9042
20. Willow Creek	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
21. Mount Lindo/Willow Springs	Bob Shade	303-975-2476

* to participate in this area, you must contact the area leader no later than Monday, December 12th.

One area still needs a leader/leader duo – If interested PLEASE contact the Compiler.

Denver Urban Christmas Count

Sunday, January 1, 2017

Count Leader, Hugh Kingery,
303-814-2723

A holiday tradition—everyone welcome: beginners, intermediate, and advanced.

The more eyes we have, the more birds we see. And we like to encourage people to get involved. Start the

New Year with a half day or whole day effort, a good way to start 2017!

The count covers a circle with a 15-mile diameter that includes the Platte River from North City limits to Mississippi, west to Buckley Field, and Rocky Mtn Arsenal.

For better coverage, this year we

divided Aurora into three parts.

Compilation (and pot luck) at 5 p.m., Casey Davenport's (address TBA).

Please call Urling (303-814-2723) so we can count you in on the chili pot, Urling's brownies, Casey's hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie, or finger foods.

Area Location	Leader	Phone
South Platte South (to Confluence Park, walking)	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
South Platte Central (Confluence Park to Riverside Cemetery, walking)	Casey Davenport	303-744-0613
South Platte North (walking)	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
Lower Sand Creek/Commerce City/Montbello (walking)	Mike Serruto	303-377-9870 720-581-2711
Aurora: Buckley Road/First Creek trail/Parkfield Lake Park (walking)	Patrick O'Driscoll patodrisk@gmail.com	303-885-6955
Aurora: Bluff Lake, Star K, south to CCSP (walking)	A. J. Gest offsetaj@comcast.net	303-994-2420
Aurora: Coal Creek Env Ctr/Buckley Field (walking, car)	Keith Hidalgo	720-929-9302
Cherry Creek Res (walking)	Jeff Dawson Jeff.Dawson1831@gmail.com	720-431-3899
Cherry Creek, dam to University Blvd (8.1-mile walk)	Paul Slingsby paslingsby@comcast.net	303-422-3728
SE Denver, N/Hampden (walking)	Mary Keithler mkeithler@gmail.com Harriett Stratton hstra10@comcast.net	303-771-1421 303-941-7009 303-798-9924
Kent School, S/Hampden (walking, car)	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
City Park/Park Hill (car, walking)	Kevin Corwin	720-482-8454
Botanic Gardens, Wash Park, Denver Country Club (car, walking)	Marilyn Rhodes Bob Santangelo	303-674-9895 303-477-1367
Rocky Mtn Arsenal (car, walking)	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
Fairmount, Lowry Field (car, walking)	Ann Bonnell, Tuesday Birders	303-979-6211
Denver Zoo	Brad Parks	Closed

Call goes out for 2017 DFO grant applications

by Candice Johnson, Carol Cochran,
and Tina Jones

The DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Fund is now accepting applications for grants to

encourage the study, appreciation, and preservation of birds and their habitats.

Preference will be given to projects in the Denver metropolitan

area, the Front Range, the state of Colorado, and the USA, in that order.

Awards typically range from \$500 to \$2000.

Recent past grants have included grants to fund student scholarships to local birding camps, support research on McCown's Longspur, Clark's Nutcrackers, and Flammulated Owls.

Proposals should include a description of goals, a methodology, a complete budget including other funding sources, and an indication of any completed preliminary work.

It is expected that successful grantees will provide a report on their project to be published in *The Lark Bunting* newsletter and on the DFO website, or lead a field trip to the research site, or make a presentation at the monthly meeting.

An application form and a history of past grants awarded are available on the website at <http://dfobirds.org/Grants/>.

Deadline for applications is February 1, 2017. Notification of awards will be made soon after this date.



Pied-billed Grebe, Cherry Creek State Park, 29 October 2016. John Breitsch

It's time to renew your DFO membership for 2017!

Renew online at <http://dfobirds.org/DFO/Membership.aspx> with your credit card, or by filling out and mailing the application on the back page of *The Lark Bunting*, or at the November DFO meeting. And be sure and donate to the Grants Fund.

Denver Field Ornithologists

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HISTORIAN

Kristine Haglund	303-906-8044	kahaglund1@aol.com
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FIELD TRIP SCHEDULERS

January	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
February	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
March	Bill Wuerthele	303-333-2519
April	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
May	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
June	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
July	Jill Boice	303-863-7580
August	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
September	Mary Geder	303-981-8823
October	Chris Owens	303-772-6048
November	Mary Cay Burger	720-940-8394
December	Jill Boice	303-863-7580

DFO logo by Radeaux

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Nominating	Candice Johnson	candice.johnson@childrenscolorado.org

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LINKS AND CONTACTS

DFO Facebook	Photos and discussion	facebook.com/groups/dfobirds
COBirds	Internet bird-sighting discussion list	cobirds@googlegroups.com
DMNS Liaison	Jeff Stephenson	jstephenson@dmns.org
Tuesday Birders	Mary Keithler	mkeithler@yahoo.com
	Backup contact, Dave Hill	d_d_hill@comcast.net

DFO MEETING LOCATION

Meetings open to public held fourth Monday of each month except May, June, July, and December at the Ricketson Auditorium, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Enter in the north side security/employee entrance and tell the guard that you are there for the DFO meeting. Cancellations: check <http://dfobirds.org> or COBirds.

The Lark Bunting

DFO publishes *The Lark Bunting* monthly. Please submit newsletter content by the first of the month to Kay Niyo, editor, kay@kayniyo.com. Contact Kay Niyo with questions or comments: kay@kayniyo.com, 303-679-6646. DFO encourages readers to electronically submit original articles, nature writing, or photos (JPEG [* .jpg]) for *The Lark Bunting*. Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any selected articles. © 2016 Denver Field Ornithologists. All Rights Reserved.

Welcome, new members: Stephanie Boyles, Lakewood; Pamela Kloetzli, Parker; Linda Moore, Denver; Susan Pellegrin, Evergreen; Tina Peters, Elizabeth; Denise Reznicek, Centennial; Tim Ryan, Parker; Tom Sitz, Denver; Cara Welch, Brighton

Upcoming Speakers

John Drummond

"Birds of Cuba" Nov. 28, 2016

Paul Bannick

"Owls" Jan. 23, 2017

Scott Somershoe

"Appalachian Golden
Eagles" Feb. 27, 2017

Dave Leatherman

"Squirrels and Birds"
Mar. 27, 2017

Nathan Pieplow

"Bird Song" Apr. 25, 2017
(New Date)

Denver Field Ornithologists Membership Application

Join online at <http://dfobirds.org>, or by mail.

DFO memberships expire Dec. 31; valid for the next year if paid after Oct. 1.

DFO provides grants to individuals or organizations whose mission includes ornithological research, education, and conservation.

DFO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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|---|----------|
| ☐ Annual family membership (electronic <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 25 |
| ☐ Annual family membership (mailed <i>The Lark Bunting</i>) | \$ 40 |
| ☐ Student membership (age ≤ 26) | \$ 10 |
| ☐ Research, Education, & Conservation Grant Fund donation | \$ _____ |

Total \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email (legible) _____

(Must include for electronic *The Lark Bunting*)

Check payable to DFO and send to Sue Summers, 2364 W Costilla Ave, Littleton, CO 80120-3502

The Lark Bunting

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

Featured This Month

Board Charges Ahead

6 More Species Needed

CBCs Coming Up